

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

**578th Signal
Company heads
back to Iraq**

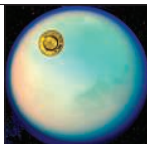
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Susan Ketter and Pfc. Michael Guglielmo



**Jones: U.S. near
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**European space
probe lands on
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SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2005

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Women in combat prohibition to remain

Army secretary says policy has been reviewed, upheld

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The MVP

vs.

The Champs

■ Colts-Patriots matchup
highlights second round
of NFL playoffs

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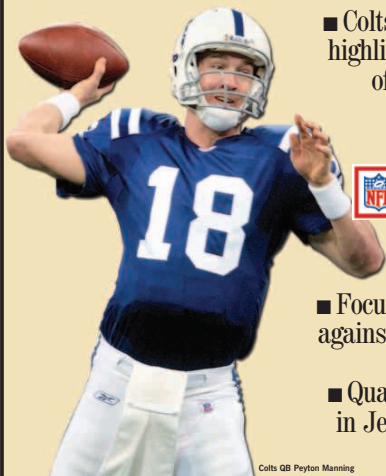


■ Focus on Falcons' Vick
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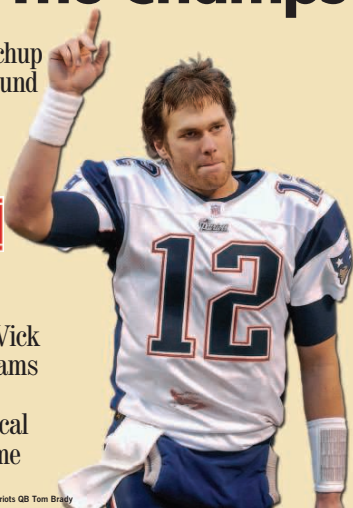
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■ Quarterbacks critical
in Jets-Steelers game

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Colts QB Peyton Manning



Patriots QB Tom Brady

STARS & STRIPES

COMING
SOON

Scene on Sunday

Big mess is among
Spain's best bets

Scene on Sunday

Kate Bosworth
does her researchDon't miss a
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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

Military

Air Force investigation: A two-star general recently dismissed as the Air Force's top military lawyer for engaging in "unprofessional relationships" with female subordinates will be retired at the rank of colonel, costing him an estimated \$900,000 in future retirement pay, officials said Monday.

The decision was announced by Air Force Secretary James G. Roche, who said Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Fiscus, the former Judge Advocate General of the Air Force, will retire effective Feb. 1.

In its investigation of Fiscus, the Air Force Inspector General substantiated three categories of allegations: unprofessional relationships with female subordinates, inappropriate sexual advances toward female subordinates, and improper relationships with female civilians. The incidents happened over a 10-year period and involved 13 women, the Air Force statement said.

Military policy questioned: The number of Arabic linguists discharged from the military for violating its "don't ask, don't tell" policy is higher than previously reported, according to records obtained by a research group. The group contends the records show that the military — at a time when it and U.S. intelligence agencies had not enough Arabic speakers — is putting its anti-gay stance ahead of national security.

Between 1998 and 2004, the military discharged 20 Arabic and six Parsi speakers, according to Department of Defense data obtained by the Center for the Study of Sex Minorities in the Military under a Freedom of Information Act request.

The military previously confirmed that seven translators who specialized in Arabic had been discharged between 1998 and 2003 because they were gay. The military did not break down the discharges by year, but said some, but not all, of the additional 13 discharges of Arabic speakers occurred in 2004.

World

Ukraine election dispute: The campaign of Viktor Yanukovich, officially the loser of Ukraine's presidential election, delivered several hundred volumes of documents to the Supreme Court on Friday in another attempt to overturn the vote.

But pro-Western winner Viktor Yushchenko indicated he was confident the court will reject the appeal, ordering his supporters to remove their tent camp in downtown Kiev. City authorities have repeatedly urged the removal of the tents, concerned about declining sanitary conditions. Residents had vowed to stay in their tents until Yushchenko's inauguration, which has been delayed by his rival's numerous legal challenges.

States

Skalke murder conviction: Lawyers for Michael Skalke argue that the Kennedy cousin convicted of bludgeoning a 15-year-old neighbor when he was a teen should be set free because authorities waited too long to prosecute him.

Skalke's lawyers argue that state law at the time Martha Maxwell was killed in 1975 set a five-year limit for prosecution of all cases except those that could carry the death penalty. Skalke was not charged with a capital offense in 2000.

Clarification
A story in Friday's edition about the availability of flu shots in Europe contained inaccurate information. The flu shot program is administered by the U.S. Army's Europe Regional Medical Command.



Robert Blake trial: Los Angeles Police Department detective Ron Ito, left, works with prosecutor Shelli Samuels, sitting in car at right, to position the passenger's side seat of a car that police say is a copy of the car Robert Blake's wife died in Los Angeles. Jurists in Blake's trial went on a field trip to the site Thursday, where prosecutors recreated the scene where the actor's wife was killed in 2001.

Prosecutors contend Connecticut has never set a deadline to try murder cases. They say that the nature of the crime, not the potential punishment, determines whether it is subject to the time limit.

Arguments on Skalke's appeal were scheduled Friday morning before the state Supreme Court. The high court was not expected to rule Friday.

"Dimebag" Darrell Abbott shooting: The gunman who killed a heavy metal guitarist and three others last month fired 15 shots and had 35 more rounds of ammunition when a police officer fatally shot him, authorities said.

Nathan Gale, 25, of Marysville, Ohio, shot and killed former Pantera guitarist "Dimebag" Darrell Abbott and three others when they tried to intervene during a concert Dec. 8 at the Alrosa Villa nightclub in Columbus.

Investigators said Thursday they believe Gale fired 10 shots, reloaded and fired five more before Officer James Niggemeyer killed him.

Ex-undercover agent perjury trial: Jurors in the perjury trial of a former undercover agent who sent dozens of blacks to prison on phony drug charges will decide his fate without hearing him testify.

Defense attorneys rested their case Thursday in Tom Coleman's trial without calling the agent to the stand. Prosecutors were scheduled to present a brief rebuttal Friday before both sides made closing arguments. Coleman is accused of two counts of perjury for allegedly lying about his 1998 arrest for allegedly using a government-issued gasoline card to fill his personal vehicle while he was working as a Cochran County deputy.

Logging injunction: An appeals court Thursday lifted its injunction barring salvage logging from the site of the nation's worst wildfire in 2002 — an issue that has pitted environmentalists against the timber industry and Bush administration.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decided a lower court judge did not abuse his discretion when he refused to stop salvage logging on old-growth forest in the Rogue-River Siskiyou National Forest in northwestern Oregon.

Six timber sales amounting to 47 million board feet were conducted in the area and brought \$2 million.

Lifting the preliminary injunction "will allow us to move forward with economic recovery and restoration of the land," said forest supervisor Scott Conroy.

The appeal of the lower court's ruling will be heard March 22.

Ga. sheriff's firings: More than two dozen employees fired by a sheriff on his first day on the job returned to work under court Thursday, but were given low-ranking positions at the county jail.

The employees, mostly deputies and officers, were fired by Clayton County Sheriff Victor Hill on Jan. 3. A day later, a judge ordered Hill to rehire them amid questions of whether they were terminated without cause, in violation of civil service rules.

The workers also are challenging their dismissals in federal court, claiming they were racially and politically motivated. Those fired include four of the highest-ranking officers, all of them white. Hill, who is black, has denied any discrimination.

Execution ethics: A Kentucky medical board dismissed an ethics complaint Thursday against Gov. Ernie Fletcher, saying he was acting as a head of state rather than a trained physician when he ordered a killer's execution.

In a unanimous decision, a panel of the Kentucky Medical Licensure Board found "no merit" in the claim that it was unethical for Fletcher to sign a death warrant because he is a doctor.

American Medical Association guidelines prohibit doctors from participating in executions. Kentucky law says doctors must follow the AMA ethical guidelines.

Stories and photo from wire reports

Comics, horoscopes
and advice every day
in Stars and Stripes

Signal company ready to connect in Iraq

BY JESSICA INIGO
Stars and Stripes

DARMSTADT, Germany — Face-to-face communications may not be what the 100 signal troops waiting Friday to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom are trained for, but the gesture was appreciated.

First Sgt. Michael Williams told the troops that even though they were running behind schedule to load onto buses headed for Ramstein Air Base, he was going to give them 10 more minutes to say their goodbyes.

"Usually, I'm not sensitive, but I am today because there are families here," said the 578th Signal Company first sergeant, while standing in front of his formation outside of the 22nd Signal Brigade headquarters on Cambrai-Fritsch-Casern. Then he warned them never to bring up his sensitive side again.

No problem, said troops, as they jumped at the opportunity to connect one last time with friends and family.

Embraces, photos, tears and laughter ensued.

During Spc. Calvin Coleman's 10 minutes, he hooked up with friends, who surrounded him in support.

"I'm going to miss all these guys," he said, pointing to his friends. "Plus my other husbands and family that couldn't be here."

The next connection these troops will be making will be in Iraq, ensuring military forces have proper communication capabilities provided by the 578th Signal Company for another year.



"They've basically only had about a nine-minute turnaround from the last time they were there, but they've worked hard and are ready to go," said Lt. Col. Edwin Droese, the 440th Signal Battalion commander, just before the ceremony.

Family members expressed that the short turnaround was tough on them.

"We don't want him to go. It's too soon after the last time. But we'll do it. He'll come back," said Megan McLain through a tear-streaked face.

Her son Jordan, 6, tugged at his mother and said, "I miss Daddy," even while Spc. Scott McLain was still sitting on the bus in front of them getting ready to go. This made the mother and her daughter, Taylor, 10, let out a little laugh.

For Megan Acosta, who tried to fight the tears when her husband, 2nd Lt. John Acosta, left, this is the first time she will experience a deployment.

"We didn't say good-bye. We said, 'See

you later,'" said the new wife. "I'm proud of him. I know he's going to do good. And I know I'm going to be OK. It's just going to take time. I'll keep myself busy."

After the 10 minutes were up, and all troops accounted for, four buses circled around the loop outside their brigade headquarters three times before driving off and leaving quiet friends and family members to continue on with their day.

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Left: Spc. Scott McLain, of the 578th Signal Company, gets a goodbye kiss from daughter Taylor, 10, before boarding a bus that will take him and other members of the unit on the first leg of their deployment to the Middle East. Far left: Members of the 578th Signal Company say a prayer during a farewell ceremony in Darmstadt, Germany, on Friday.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

Bamberg kids present 'wax' museum

BY RICK EMERT
Stars and Stripes

BAMBERG, Germany — Although they were no match as far as likeness goes, the "wax figures" at Bamberg Elementary School's wax museum of inventors certainly had Madame Tussaud's beat in how lifelike they were.

About 50 pupils from Dianne Hodges' and Sally Friedrich's fourth-grade classes posed Friday as wax figures of inventors they had researched on the Internet. Parents and pupils from two other Bamberg Elementary School classes had remote controls that would turn the figures on to speak about their inventions.

Although they tried to stand perfectly still — in true wax figure fashion — when not giving their narration, the children giggled occasionally when they thought no one was looking.

Pupils could pick any inventor they wanted to research, but the focus was on black inventors, Hodges said.

"We thought this would increase the kids' aware-

ness of the many inventions by African-Americans as we get ready for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and Black History Month," she said.

A particularly talkative wax figure of Madame C.J. Walker, portrayed by Desmonique Lacy, told of Walker's hair-care treatment that made her very wealthy in the early 1900s.

Although the pupils were only required to memorize a paragraph, Desmonique's narrative lasted a couple of minutes.

"This was a very good project, but it was hard to learn what she invented," she said.

Robert Dusek, who studied Henry Ford, said something that not many children are likely to say.

"I like memorizing things," Robert said. "I knew that he invented cars, but I learned that he also invented the V-8 engine. I was kind of nervous, and I've been saying 'um' a lot."

Whether they were nervous or not, the wax figures from Hodges' class probably preferred their public speaking gig over what would follow the one-hour wax museum project — a spelling test.

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RICK EMERT/Stars and Stripes

Pupil Sebastian Pippin, portraying Thomas Edison, tells Sgt. Raul Nunez, of the 54th Engineer Battalion, and Jessica Nunez about his inventions Friday at the "wax" museum of inventors at Bamberg Elementary School, Germany.

Candlelight walk in honor of Dr. King

Pfc. Winnie Moore, of the 54th Engineer Battalion, lights a candle for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. candlelight walk Tuesday on Warner Barracks in Bamberg, Germany. About 100 people marched and 150 attended the program.



Soldiers welcomed home

VICENZA, Italy — Seven members of the 510th Personnel Services Battalion were feted in a welcome home ceremony Thursday at Caserma Ederle.

The soldiers were among 27 members of the battalion, headquartered in Mannheim, Germany, who returned recently from almost a year's service in Iraq. Eighteen soldiers returned to Mannheim and two to Heidelberg last week. Detachment B was based in Balad, Iraq, for 360 days. Detachment A, with soldiers based in locations around Germany, returned in mid-December.

Col. Donald Drummer, the 22nd Area Support Group commander, welcomed back the Vicenza contingent in a ceremony at Club Veneto.

Entertainment director dies

A longtime entertainment director of a Garmisch, Germany, military nightclub died this month.

Terese Rudolph died due to complications from a heart attack. She was 92.

She took over the position at the Army's swank Casa Carica club in 1949 and worked with the Army until she left Europe in 1971.

Rudolph spent her final years in Los Angeles, but she spent much of her life abroad. At 17, she became a ballerina with the Chicago Civic Opera Company.

During World War II, she traveled with the United Service Organizations, and was in Paris when the city was formally liberated. She applied for the entertainment director position in Garmisch at the urging of her brother. The club had an ice rink and hosted ice shows; Rudolph worked up using her skills as a dancer to advise skaters, even though she didn't skate herself.

Rudolph's skaters would go on to star in shows such as the Ice Capades, Ice Follies and Holiday on Ice.

From staff reports



Photos courtesy of the Naval Oceanographic Office

Above: Members of Naval Oceanographic Office's Fleet Survey Team, Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Gilles and Lt. Richard Kennedy Jr., collect geodetic measurements in Iraq. Waves smashed navigation buoys, dragged sandbars into shipping channels, lifted reefs and other obstacles hundreds of feet in some spots and tossed debris everywhere.

Right: Surveyors ready for a mission. Navy surveyors are checking out changes to the ocean floor caused by recent tsunamis.



Navy to chart ocean floor after tsunami

BY LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Last month's deadly tsunami wreaked havoc underwater too. Waves smashed navigation buoys, dragged sandbars into shipping channels, lifted reefs and other obstacles hundreds of feet in some spots and tossed debris everywhere.

Navy cartographers say navigation through the Indian Ocean will be problematic for years due to last month's violent earthquake and deadly tsunami, both of which altered normal shipping routes.

"Most of those charts have to be redone," said Steve Honda, spokesman for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. "Until we actually get out there, we won't know how much has changed."

Officials from the U.S. Geological Survey said most non-sailors won't notice the changes; typical textbook maps and reference globes don't show the area in enough detail to highlight the geographical shifts.

See related story
on Page 11

But for sailors and commercial ships, the changes complicate movement through the region. Honda's agency, which is responsible for the U.S. Navy's nautical guides, already has received one unconfirmed report from a commercial ship in the region that the ocean floor rose nearly 1,000 feet in an international shipping lane.

Other research has shown miles of sandbars shifted and coastlines collapsing into the sea, according to Mark Jarrett, deputy director of the Naval Oceanographic Office's Survey Operations Center.

"We've been asked to go in after hurricanes to check our maps, but we've never seen anything to this scale," he said.

The undersea confusion has further com-

plicated getting aid to devastated countries, since larger ships cannot easily move into major ports because of debris obstacles. Jarrett said so far most of the supplies being moved into ruined areas have been airlifted in or transported on hovercraft-type boats, both of which are expensive.

NGA officials have issued a general warning about the potential navigation issues for ships in the region, but won't be able to offer specific route changes until surveyors can examine the area.

Jarrett said his office already has dispatched a fleet of surveyors to the region to begin rebuilding charts, especially those surrounding major ports.

Ultimately replacing markers and updating maps near the shoreline will fall to the countries affected, but U.S. personnel are now putting together initial sketches of what is in the water.

"We can tell people what debris is clogging channels, what buoys are left and put

in temporary markers," Jarrett said. "Eventually, this will require us to go back and completely rebuild charts. But we can do a rough survey in a day, maybe hours."

Survey crews launch from naval ships in the area on seven-foot rigid-bottom rafts, and use portable sonar devices to scan for potential hazards. Jarrett said once collected, that information can be transmitted to military personnel in the area almost instantaneously, giving them a larger view of what is below than their ships' sonar systems can.

Only eight surveyors are currently in the region, Jarrett said another ship with personnel and equipment is en route to help map hundreds of miles of critical underwater channels.

Honda said even with more personnel the process of rebuilding the navigation charts won't be finished anytime soon.

"We're talking about a process that's not days but years," he said.

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U.S. military's tsunami mission keeps aid flowing

BY JULIANA GTITTER
Stars and Stripes

UTAPAO, Thailand — Combined Support Forces working on relief efforts in South Asia moved 3.4 million pounds of relief aid and flew 1,224 missions as of Friday, said Marine Lt. Col. Robert Krieg, a force planning team member.

About 19,500 servicemembers are deployed — 12,000 aboard ships — in support of Operation Unified Assistance, the massive U.S. military effort to help tsunami-ravaged South Asia.

In addition to the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group operating off the coast of Indonesia, heavy lift helicopters from the USS Bonhomme Richard and Expeditionary Strike Group 5 and assets from the USS Fort McHenry from Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, continued ferrying aid to Indonesia.

Krieg also said Sasebo's USS Essex Amphibious Ready Group is en route to eventually replace the Bonhomme Richard.

In Indonesia, the hardest-hit nation, military aircraft including 40 helicopters — as assisted by Marine Corps landing craft, air

cushions — moved 165,000 pounds of relief aid into damaged coastal areas and finished transporting a French field clinic into the Sumatran city of Meulaboh.

U.S. Navy medics established a dental clinic and saw 100 patients Wednesday while engineers continued assessing washed-out bridges along the west coast, Krieg said.

U.S. officials continued planning the use of an Indonesian airstrip on Sabang Island off the Aceh coast. U.S. and other nations' military aircraft could use the airstrip to take pressure off the congested airport at Banda Aceh, Krieg said.

In Sri Lanka, Marine engineers conducted two cleanup projects and U.S. Coast Guard C-130s arrived to assist the airlift.

And in Thailand, military aircraft continued airlifting relief to aid agencies in Phuket. About 800 servicemembers currently are based at the mission headquarters in Utapao.

Krieg said operations overall are evolving from immediate relief assistance to sustaining refugees and others affected by the disaster.

The initial plan to bring four key components — water, airlift, medical support and engineer capabilities to remove debris — gradually is being adjusted through continued assessments and coordination with local governments to meet the changing needs.

Emphasis now is moving toward repairing essential infrastructure and preventing epidemics and disease. However, each of the three countries being assisted, Krieg said, has very different needs.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian government's recently announced restrictions on foreign military operations are not "impacting" U.S. naval forces providing relief," Rear Adm. Victor G. Guillory told Pentagon reporters in a telephone session from Utapao, Thailand.

Earlier this week, Indonesia's Vice President, Jusuf Kalla, announced that foreign troops must leave the country's restive Aceh province by the end of March, while cabinet ministers set a March 26 deadline for assuming control of tsunami relief efforts from international humanitarian groups and foreign military forces.

Guillory, who is deputy commander of

U.S. Naval forces supporting Operation Unified Assistance, the coordinated multinational relief effort, confirmed that the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier left Indonesian territorial waters Wednesday to conduct training missions by U.S. fighter jets that are based on the vessel.

However, such movements are "a routine procedure," Guillory said, underlaying reports that Jakarta's government had refused to allow Indonesia's airspace to be used for such training.

A ship as large as the Lincoln, Guillory said, requires "a great deal of room to conduct fixed-wing operations. That's why [the Lincoln] moved away from the coast for a fixed period of time."

Guillory said that the Lincoln would return to its previous station once the flight training is over.

During the fighter jet exercise, meanwhile, the Lincoln's helicopters are continuing to fly into Indonesia to carry food and water to remote communities along the devastated west coast of that country, Guillory said.

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Jones: Romania, Bulgaria base agreements are near

From Stripes and wire reports

The U.S. military is about to secure agreements with Bulgaria and Romania that would enable troops to train at sprawling bases there — perhaps by the end of the year, the top U.S. commander in Europe said Friday.

The United States was looking at up to five facilities in each country for use by Army, Air Force, Navy or Marine units, according to Marine Gen. James L. Jones, commander of both the U.S. European Command and NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.

Jones made the comments Friday during a breakfast meeting with reporters in Casteau, Belgium. Earlier this week, he toured bases in Bulgaria while also making stops in Romania and Lithuania.

"This is part and parcel of the transformation of our footprint in Europe, which has been in need of surgery for some time," he said.

Plans for the bases could be drawn up soon, and if approved by the U.S. Congress and governments in both countries, Jones said, training deployments could start quickly.

"There's no reason why we could not start with deployment this year," he said.

Jones' special assistant, Army Col. Catherine Abbott, said U.S. troops would be tenants at the bases and would not own them.

"We will just use them, and when the need arises all the agreements will be in place," she said.

President Bush announced last year that he intended to move some troops from bases in Europe and South Korea to bases in the United States. Bush also said that new, smaller bases would be established in Eastern Europe and Africa.

Abbott said that the establishment of bases in Bulgaria and Romania did not mean that bases in Germany would be closing this year.

Under Bush's plan, the United States would move away from many of its big, permanent bases where troops are stationed long-term with families and large back-up infrastructures. Instead, it would use smaller, more austere facilities where troops would rotate in for shorter deployments.

The Bulgarian and Romanian bases "are purely military sites without family, without infrastructure changes," Jones said.

The two countries are also thought to be not as restrictive as Germany, for example, on the types of training that could take place there.

Over the past two years, U.S. military planners have said that a network of smaller bases spread around the world will provide more flexibility in dealing with terrorism, regional crises and other emerging threats.

Romania and Bulgaria, which joined NATO in April, are considered particularly suited to new U.S. bases because of their proximity to volatile regions in the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East.

They also have Soviet-era facilities that could be adapted for American use, and both countries are keen to host U.S. troops.

Jones said the United States has sought to calm Russian concerns about any eastern movement of U.S. forces.

"We've kept our Russian friends fully apprised of our intentions," he said. "That has had a reassuring effect."

Three earn MWR honors

Stars and Stripes

A trio of Morale, Welfare and Recreation managers in Germany was singled out this week as three of the Army's best in providing spirit-raising services to military personnel and their families.

Each year, the Department of the Army combs its installations worldwide to find and reward exemplary MWR workers, according to a news release from the Installation Management Agency-Europe.

In the Kaiserslautern military community, Jutta Morgan received the James A. Carroll Jr. award for successfully running 415th Base Support Battalion's Kazzaba Club, the highest-revenue club in Europe, according to the IMA.

For the 235th BSB in Ansbach, Terry Wilcox picked up an Excellence in Management award for a midsize facility for expanding and improving the Katterbach Action Lanes bowling center.

Improvements at the 414th HSB's International Club in Hanau were also worthy of an award, where Mark Siple picked up Most Improved Facility honors for leading the club's dramatic financial turnaround.

Recipients of the Army honors were chosen in December and will formally receive their awards later this year.



KRISTEN CHANDLER TOTH/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

The driver of a vehicle receives instructions from his ground guides as the first equipment from the 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team returns to Schweinfurt, Germany, on Wednesday.

Germany soldiers begin to return from Iraq deployments

BY STEVE LEWIS

Stars and Stripes

WÜRZBURG, Germany — About 75 soldiers came home to Germany early Thursday morning from Iraq, a trickle of returning troops that soon will become a flood.

The soldiers arrived in small groups at bases in Würzburg, Schweinfurt, Katterbach and Kitzingen between 4 and 6 a.m., after a 12-hour departure delay in their flight from Iraq to Germany.

One of the two largest groups included 28 soldiers from the Würzburg-based 67th Combat Support Hospital, which deployed to Iraq in January 2004 and staffed field hospitals in Mosul, Tikrit, Abu Ghraib and Fallujah.

Thursday's arrivals were mostly female junior enlisted soldiers or noncommissioned officers, said Roger Teel, a spokesman for the 67th CSH, and they were part of the second significant group of troops to arrive home.

The rest of the unit is expected home during the next two weeks. The other significant group included 25 soldiers from Company B, 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment, which is based in Katterbach.

Many family members rose before dawn and huddled in the

unit's hangar, then cheered at 6:20 a.m. when the hangar's huge doors opened and the troops marched in, said Rabbia Nombamba, a spokeswoman for the Ansbach-based 235th Base Support Battalion. One soldier, Sgt. Juan Torres-Rivera, met his 8-month-old son for the first time.

The Company B soldiers, under the command of Capt. Brandon Russell, had served as air traffic controllers in the Tikrit area during their 11-month deployment. A second group of controllers from the same unit is expected home soon, Nombamba said.

Other returning soldiers represented the 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, the 101st Military Intelligence Battalion, the Division Artillery, and the 38th Personnel Support Battalion, according to information released by the 417th Base Support Battalion in Kitzingen. All will undergo seven half-days of "reintegration training," then go on 30 days of block leave.

An advance party of 1st Infantry Division troops returned home just before Christmas, and the first group of 67th CSH troops got back Jan. 3. More than 11,000 1st ID troops are expected to return to bases in northern Bavaria by late March.

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Capt. Brandon Russell, commander of Company B, 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment, holds his daughter during a welcome home ceremony on Friday morning in Katterbach, Germany.

RABIA NOMBAMBA
Courtesy of the U.S. Army

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Graner's abuse case goes to Ft. Hood jury

BY T.A. BADGER
The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — Spc. Charles Graner Jr. and other Abu Ghraib guards beat up and humiliated detainees at the Baghdad prison simply for the fun of it, prosecutors told a jury Friday during closing arguments.

The panel of four Army officers and six senior enlisted men began their deliberations in the late morning. Seven jurors must vote to convict on each charge for Graner to be found guilty. Graner faces five charges.

Capt. Chris Graveline, one of the prosecutors, recounted incident after incident of alleged abuse, buttressing many with photos and video taken by guards inside the prison in November 2003, to make the case that Graner was a sadistic soldier who took pleasure in seeing detainees suffer.

"It was for sport, for laughs," Graveline said. "What we have here is plain abuse. There is no justification."

Defense lawyer Guy Womack countered that his client and other Abu Ghraib guards were under extreme pressure from intelligence agents to use physical violence to prepare detainees for questioning.

"It was a persistent, consistent set of orders," said Womack. "They were then up to the guards, to do things so we can interrogate them successfully in support of our mission ... we had men and women being killed."

Graner, a 36-year-old reservist

from Uniontown, Pa., is the first soldier to be tried on charges arising from the prison scandal. He is charged with conspiracy, assault, dereliction of duty and committing indecent acts and could get 17½ years in a military prison.

Womack reminded jurors that Saddam Hussein was not yet in U.S. custody when the alleged abuse occurred.

"There was somebody very important on everybody's mind," he said. "Wouldn't it be logical to have your interrogators use pressure to get information to try to find him?"

Womack described the notorious photos taken inside the prison as "yellows humiliated and humiliating stress felt by the Abu Ghraib guards."

He also tried to plant the seed that Graner and the other low-level guards were patsies in a cover-up to protect Army officers once those photos went public.

Among other things, Graner is accused of stacking naked detainees in a human pyramid and later ordering them to masturbate while other soldiers took photographs. He also allegedly punched one man in the head hard enough to knock him out, and struck an injured prisoner with a metal cage.

Graner did not testify during the four-day trial, which included testimony from three guards who had made plea deals with prosecutors. Two other guards also testified, along with Pfc. Lynette England, a clerk at Abu Ghraib who recently gave birth to a baby believed to be fathered by Graner.



U.S. Army Spc. Charles Graner walks into the judicial complex for his court-martial at Fort Hood, Texas, on Friday.

Womack said Thursday that there was no need for Graner to tell his version of what went on inside the prison because his other witnesses were so effective in making the case.

The final two witnesses testified that intelligence officers wanted detainees roughed up, and that they praised guards for their performance.

Graveline used some of Graner's own e-mails as evidence of how much he enjoyed the pain he inflicted on detainees. In one e-mail, he described beating on prisoners as "a good upper-body workout, but hard on the hands."

The e-mail messages were given to jurors Tuesday. The New York Times, which said it got them from a person close to the defense, reported that they were sent to Graner's family and friends, including his young children.

Soldiers' extra pay is data input error

BY LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Wait, don't spend that cash! The couple hundred extra bucks \$3,000 soldiers have seen or are about to see in their January paychecks is not a late Christmas present from Uncle Sam.

The extra money, which for most affected soldiers amounts to an additional \$200 and \$300 in their paychecks this month, is there because of a data input error made at the Defense Department's joint Defense Finance and Accounting Service, according to Col. Kenneth Crowder, DFAS' director of Army Pay Operations.

The error occurred when a DFAS employee was electronically updating the mail allowance rate for 2005 and accidentally backdated the change to 2004, Crowder said in a telephone interview with Stripes on Friday from his Indianapolis office.

As a result, the Defense Department's pay computers decided that soldiers who have Army mail cards, but who are authorized for reimbursement for some meals, should get a refund for 2004.

The refund shows up as "refund of BAS," or Basic Allowance for Subsistence, in the "entitlements" column of a soldier's Leave and Earnings Statement, Crowder said.

The Army is required by law to collect the funds from any "administrative or technical error" back from soldiers in the same month the error was made, Crowder said.

That means that most of the soldiers affected by the glitch will have the money taken back from their last January paycheck.

However, while the money will be refunded to the Army in one chunk for the vast majority of affected soldiers who were overpaid by \$200 to \$300, Army officials are bending the rules a little for the

316 soldiers who saw refunds of \$500, Crowder said.

Those individuals will get the money taken back in two installments, in order to "mitigate hardship" on soldiers who spent the money by mistake.

Army DFAS officials caught the error around Jan. 4, Crowder said.

But because the pay system is now joint, the mistake could not be immediately corrected "without interfering with the processing of every servicemember's paycheck," Crowder said.

Soldiers, like all servicemembers, can opt to be paid monthly, or twice each month. Most elect to receive their checks twice each month, although a few do for the monthly option, service officials said.

So most soldiers have already seen half their faux "refund," and the others will see it given and taken away in the same check at the end of the month, so in effect, "it will be a wash" on the bottom line, Crowder said.

To get the word out to soldiers not to spend the extra cash, DFAS officials sent an e-mail Jan. 12 to the Army Knowledge Online account of every soldier in the Department of Defense, explaining the situation, Crowder said.

DFAS also sent a list of affected soldiers to every one of the Army's defense military pay offices, asking officials there to check and see if any of their command's soldiers are on the list.

As so, Crowder said, the pay office officials are supposed to contact the soldier's commander and ask him or her to "contact each affected soldier individually."

Meanwhile, any soldiers wondering if they were affected by the error also can call 1-800-MyPay and speak to a customer service technician, or go to www.mypay.dfas.mil for more information.

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgessl@stripes.com

Harvey: No combat for fearful GIs in 'transformed' Army

BY LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Women will not be allowed to serve in combat positions in the new "transformed" Army, according to a decision made by senior service leaders and approved Thursday by Army Secretary Francis Harvey.

The Army has been reviewing its policy prohibiting women in combat ever since last year, when service leaders decided to shift emphasis from large, cumbersome divisions to "Brigade Combat Teams" that are much more flexible and lethal than today's organizations.

Under a 10-year-old ban, women are not allowed to be part of combat units, such as armored cavalry or the infantry.

After reviewing the Army's existing policy, "my assessment is that, in our new Brigade Combat Teams ... no women will be assigned to a unit below the brigade level whose primary mission is direct ground combat," Harvey said in a Jan. 13 memo obtained Friday by Stripes to Sen. John Warner, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The proposal is "prohibiting women from taking jobs that are directly related to combat, the new policy also means that women will not be 'routinely co-located with units assigned direct combat mission,'" the memo says.

Since the new policy is the same as the Army's current Com-

bat Exclusion Rule, "no change to the extant policy is required," the memo says.

There is a clause in the ban, Public Law 103-160 signed by then-Defense Secretary Les Aspin in 1994, that says women are not allowed to serve "where units and positions are doctrinally required to physically collocate and remain with direct ground combat units that are closed to women."

But women are not banned from such tasks as driving trucks, working in mess halls, repairing helicopters, and other jobs that either hold the potential for enemy attacks, or require close proximity to combat units.

And because combat units cannot do their jobs without maintenance and other support assistance, "there have been support units attached to maneuver units in both Afghanistan and Iraq that include women, Army officials have noted."

Harvey reiterated that the clause will remain in effect. But opponents of women serving in war were angered in October when Army officials said they were considering changes to the exclusion rules.

Harvey conducted "a systemic review of all Army policies" after he was sworn in Nov. 19, 2004, according to his memo.

Based on that review, and a subsequent review undertaken by Army staff, Harvey decided not to make changes to the Army's current policy.

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Proposed benefits increase

Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., and Defense Department officials have negotiated a proposed increase in military death benefits that would boost total payments to survivors of servicemembers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan by \$238,000.

The higher payments would be made retroactive to the start of the war in Afghanistan, in the fall of 2001, to help service families who have lost loved ones in combat as well as those who will in the future.

The proposal has two main features. Designated beneficiaries or next of kin of servicemembers killed in war would receive an additional \$100,000 in benefits under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, whether or not they had SGLI coverage.

Also, lump-sum military death gratuity, now \$12,420, would be raised to \$100,000 but only for deaths resulting from combat.

"The American people want to know that a soldier who gives his life for his country is generously taken care of. It's important as a statement of our support for those who go into harm's way," Sessions told Military Update.

The nation, he added, seeks "a

MILITARY UPDATE

Tom Philpott

bond" with its warriors and part of that bond are assurances that their families will be well taken care of if something happens to them. We're not there yet. This bill would make a big step in that direction."

A Sessions aide said the bill would raise military death benefits nearer to amounts typically paid to families of law enforcement personnel and firemen killed in the line of duty. Another consideration, he said, was the stark disparity in compensation paid to families of servicemembers who die fighting terrorists and an average award of \$1.7 million that the government has provided to families who lost loved ones in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

To comment, write Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centerville, Va. 20120-1111, e-mail updates@stripes.com or visit www.militaryupdate.com

Three U.S. troops killed in Iraq violence

Rebels kidnap 15 Iraqi soldiers

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Three U.S. troops were killed Friday, and Sunni Muslim militants claimed responsibility for the assassination of a community leader promoting the election on behalf of Iraq's top Shiite cleric.

Attackers also fired on a bus carrying Iraqi national guard members near Baghdad, about 90 miles west of Baghdad, on Friday, kidnapping 15 guardsmen and leaving the bus in flames, a guard official said.

Brig. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, deputy commander of the 1st Cavalry Division controlling the Baghdad area, warned of an expected surge in bombings and other violence ahead of the Jan. 30 vote and said there were no guarantees Iraqi and American forces could stop a "spectacular" attack causing mass casualties in the capital.

"If I told you I could guarantee that I'd be a fool," Hammond told reporters on Friday.

Sunni extremists have promised to violently suppress turnout,



U.S. soldiers survey the scene after an attack on their convoy, in Baghdad's Dora district, on Friday. Two soldiers were wounded when a roadside bomb overturned their armored vehicle, witnesses said.

and many Sunni Muslim leaders say the elections should be postponed until the insurgent bloodletting is stemmed.

The Sunni Muslim group of Ansar al-Islam said it targeted Sheikh Mahmud Finjan, who was shot to death on Wednesday, as a supporter of the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and "as a big supporter of the elections."

A separate ambush in Iraq's north killed three officials of a party representing Iraq's Kurds — like the Shiites, working aggressively for a high turnout in a vote expected to try a large measure of power from Iraq's long-dominant Sunni minority.

The U.S. military reported some of the latest violence Friday

— the deaths of three U.S. troops in two provinces feared to be too violence-wracked for the vote.

Two Marines of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force died in action Thursday in the western province of Anbar, the U.S. military said in a statement.

And a 1st Infantry Division soldier died while supporting Task Force Olympia operations around the volatile northern city of Mosul the same day, the military said. American forces gave no details.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, meanwhile, said conditions for the Jan. 30 national elections were "far from ideal" and Iraqi officials should intensify efforts to make the balloting inclusive.

"We... call upon all brother citizens not to participate in the elections because we are going to attack voting centers," Ansar al-Islam said in the statement claiming responsibility for killing Finjan, renewing Sunni extremist demands for a boycott of the balloting.

The message was posted on a Web site used by insurgents.

Established after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Ansar al-Islam is one of Iraq's older extremist groups — predating even the U.S. toppling of Saddam Hussein. The group has been linked to al-Qaida.

In other election-related violence, gunmen killed an Iraqi election official in western Baghdad late Thursday, police said, marking at least the seventh such killing ahead of the vote.

Attackers in a passing car fired upon Abdul Karim Jassim al-Ubeidi as he headed home, police Capt. Imad Tamir said. A group led by Jordanian militant leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claimed responsibility in a separate Web site statement for that killing.

Witnesses said attackers opened fire — apparently with rocket-propelled grenades — on the bus as the guard members were heading to a local U.S. military headquarters.

A Baghdad guard official who identified himself only as Lt. Col. Hesham said 15 were kidnapped.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Thursday, at least 1,356 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,069 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The figures include three military civilians.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,218 U.S. military members have died, according to a count that includes at least 960 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identification reported by the military:

■ Army Spc. Michael J. Smith, 24, Media, Pa.; killed Tuesday when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his vehicle in Ramadi, Iraq; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, South Korea.

Separately, 28 Iraqi prisoners escaped as they were being transported by bus from the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad to another facility, Lt. Col. Barry Johnson said Friday.

Shiite and Kurdish enthusiasm for the vote has held strong despite attacks.

On Friday, even a radical Shiite cleric officially opposed to the vote appeared to open low-key campaigning, although he is not running.

The cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr, was behind militia confrontations with U.S. troops last year in the holy city of Najaf and Baghdad's Shiite stronghold of Sadr City.

Guards at a mosque in the neighborhood handed out pro-election leaflets to worshippers at Friday prayers. "Your vote is as precious as gold as long as you obey God," the leaflets said, under al-Sadr's personal seal.

Another Mosul attack Thursday saw gunmen ambush a car carrying officials of the Kurdish Democratic Party, killing three of them, a party official said.

The Kurdish Democratic Party of Massoud Barzani is one of two main factions of Iraq's Kurds, who make up about 20 percent of the population.

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Marines urge Iraq election participation

Anbar province election board resigned after death threats

BY JOSEPH GIORORDANO

Stars and Stripes

AL ASAD, Iraq — Marine Corps officials are continuing their all-out effort to persuade Anbar province officials to participate in the upcoming elections despite skepticism about the process and the security of polling stations.

On Wednesday, Maj. Gen. Richard Natonski, 1st Marine Division commander, joined officials from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit to brief a group of influential local sheiks, imams and political leaders on the vote, which is now just about two weeks away.

"We believe the election is the first step in repairing the situation ... to fix the infrastructure, build security forces and allow a government to be established that the Iraqi people want," Natonski said.

"We want democracy in Iraq to be an Iraqi democracy, not an American democracy."

The Sunni Muslims, who dominate Anbar but are a minority in Iraq as a whole, are largely doubtful of the process, saying the Shiite majority would likely limit the Sunni turnout.

On Sunday, the entire 13-member Anbar province electoral committee resigned after members said they received death threats from insurgents. While the Independent Electoral Commission of



JOSEPH GIORORDANO/Stars

Col. Lee Miller, left, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit commander, and 1st Marine Division commander Maj. Gen. Richard Natonski, second from left, meet Wednesday in Al Asad, Iraq, with a group of Anbar Province sheiks, imams and politicians. Marine officials were urging local Iraqi leaders to support upcoming elections.

Iraq quickly replaced them with commissioners from Baghdad, the move underscored the difficulty of assuring the vote in the region.

Another problem, local officials say, is explaining to potential voters the bewildering number of candidates and parties on the ballot.

According to the commission, there are more than 7,200 candidates for the 275 representative seats to the assembly, which will write Iraq's new constitution. 72 parties, 25 independent candidates and nine "coalitions" of candidates have registered.

"Right now, we're building a new democracy. And this is the first step."

Lt. Col. Andrew Horne,
the 31st MEU election coordinator

At the next level down, there are 382 lists for the nearly 8,000 candidates running for spots on the 18 provincial councils to be elected. Each council will have 41 members, except in Baghdad, which will have 51.

Any Iraqi citizen born after Dec. 31, 1986, is eligible to vote.

There will be 7,000 ballot boxes across the country, the IECC says,

and more than 100,000 Iraqi security forces protecting polling stations. U.S. military officials, wary about any perception that they seek to influence the vote, have said they will not put forces at the polling stations.

Because of the continuing violence in Anbar and the large number of Iraqis displaced from cities such as Ramadi and Fallujah,

Anbar residents can vote at any polling station in the province as well as three stations in Baghdad. Officials have not yet released the locations of polling sites in Anbar because they do not want them targeted for attacks.

Polls will open just after sunrise and stay open until the last voter casts a ballot.

At Wednesday's meeting on Al Asad, a sprawling air base northwest of Fallujah, U.S. officials acknowledged security concerns and political worries but urged the local officials to participate.

"We need your assistance in educating your people on what they can and should be doing to prepare for the elections," said Lt. Col. Andrew Horne, the 31st MEU election coordinator.

The local officials felt there should be more polling stations.

"The number of sites is selected by the IECC," Horne told the group.

"One of the limiting factors is, there need to be Iraqis working the polls."

The commission has mandated each polling station have at least 30 people working, a figure that adds up to more than 300 polling station workers in western Anbar Province alone.

"They may not have enough workers to man all the polling stations as is," Horne said.

"If they do, we'll be pleased, but they're struggling to get the workers."

"Right now, we're building a new democracy," Horne said, meaning the Iraqis and Americans together. "And this is the first step."

E-mail Joseph Giorordano at: giorordano@starsandstripes.com

Commander: Long-term 'relationship' likely

Army Lt. Gen. David Barno says troop levels in Afghanistan should remain steady at 18,000

BY CHARLIE COON

Stars and Stripes

GARMISCH, Germany — U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan should remain steady at about 18,000 this year, and troops could be stationed there until they aren't wanted, the top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan said Thursday.

Army Lt. Gen. David Barno, commander of Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, noted that Afghan President Hamid Karzai won the election in October while campaigning on a pro-U.S. military platform.

"Karzai told voters, 'If you vote for me, you are voting for a long-term partnership with the Americans,'" Barno said in an interview with Stars and Stripes. "Now he feels he has a mandate among his people to have a long-term relationship. What that [relationship] is going to look like, I don't know."

"We hear all the time that the Afghans are more concerned about the Americans abandoning them than they are about Americans overstaying their welcome."

He said he didn't know if the United States would establish permanent military

bases in Afghanistan similar to the U.S. garrisons currently in Germany and other European countries. In addition to 18,000 U.S. troops, the Kabul-based International Security Assistance Force of troops, mostly from NATO-member nations, numbers about 8,900.

Barno was in Garmisch this week for a conference among military and diplomatic leaders from Afghanistan, Pakistan and the former Soviet nations to their north.

The United States invaded Afghanistan in October

2001, one month after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, to chase down members of the al-Qaida group, which organized the attack, as well as to topple the Taliban regime that was sympathetic to al-Qaida.

In the past year, the roles of many U.S. troops in Afghanistan have changed, Barno said.

Nineteen provincial reconstruction teams, or PRTs, which include some run

by NATO forces, have been established throughout the sprawling nation. The key to their success, Barno said, was that troops have stayed in regions long enough to become known and trusted by the locals.

The teams range in size from 50-500 troops and perform a variety of missions, including construction, meeting with mullahs and elders, intelligence gathering and security. He said the PRTs are light, but not lightweight.

"These are combat forces," Barno said. "People well know they have artillery and direct-fire capability, and that air power could [arrive] in 20 minutes."

"No one is confused that those units don't have a lot of capability. Our air power allows us to work platoon-sized, 40-man groups all over the country, very small groups instead of 100-man or 800-man groups," he said.

That quick-strike capability lets the U.S. military cover a country about the size of Iraq, with about the same population as Iraq, with 18,000 troops instead of 10 times that number, he said.

When Karzai was elected in October, an 800-soldier battalion from the 82nd Airborne Division was brought into Afghani-

stan for several weeks to provide additional security.

The election went off fairly smooth, and while Barno said it's possible that reinforcement troops could be brought in to help secure local and regional elections in the spring, he expected those elections to succeed as well.

"Whatever opinion people had before [Oct. 9, when Karzai was elected president], the enemy had no impact on the election," Barno said. "The security situation continues to improve."

"There are going to be setbacks, but there is no reason they can't have the next elections on time from a security standpoint."

Other goals of the Karzai government, in which the U.S. troops would continue playing a role, include the stripping of power of local warlords and diminishing the booming poppy trade. Poppy plants are used to make heroin.

American forces will continue to support Afghan troops fighting the drug war by providing close-air support and medical evacuations, Barno said, but are not scheduled to become involved in eradicating the poppy fields.

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coon@maine.lespines.osd.mil



Barno

IN THE STATES

FBI computer system found inadequate, old

By CURT ANDERSON
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A post-Sept. 11 computer system was supposed to solve problems for the FBI giving agents, analysts and personnel around the world the ability to share information without using paper or time-consuming scanning of documents.

But the \$170 million Virtual Case File project has proved so inadequate and outdated, it may be shelved.

"I am frustrated by the delays," FBI Director Robert Mueller said Thursday in Birmingham, Ala. "I am frustrated that we do not have on every agent's desk the capability of a modern case-management system."

The FBI is hoping to salvage some parts of the project, known as Virtual Case File. But officials acknowledged Thursday that it is possible the entire system, designed by Science Applications International Corp. of San Diego, will have to be built from scratch.

The FBI did not get what it envisioned, according to a senior FBI official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity because the project is the subject of an internal review by the Justice Department's inspector general. The official said its capabilities were only a fraction of what was sought.

After the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Mueller made improvement of the agency's computer systems a priority. Members of Congress and the independent Sept. 11 commission said the overhaul was critical to enabling the FBI and intelligence agencies such as the CIA to "connect the dots" in preventing attacks.

It is unclear how many more taxpayer dollars will have to be spent. The FBI official said the agency probably will have to ask Congress for additional funds. Some of the necessary software is probably now commercially available, which was not the case when the project began.

Virtual Case File was to be the final piece of the overhaul of antiquated FBI computers, called the Trilogy project. The first two phases of the project — deployment of a high-speed, secure FBI computer network and 30,000 new desktop computers — have been completed.

Science Applications International spokesman Jared Adams said the company "delivered the Virtual Case File system initial operation capability in December as agreed to" and would have no further comment until the Justice Department review is finished.

Sen. Charles Grassley, a senior member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said the possibility that the system may be scrapped is disappointing.



Ventura County Sheriff's Search and Rescue personnel team with California Department of Corrections prisoners Wednesday to unearth homes and artifacts from Monday's massive mudslide in La Conchita, Calif.

Calif. officials evacuate 800 homes in Riverside County

By RYAN PEARSON
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Rainwater building up behind a dam prompted authorities to order the evacuation of more than 800 homes in Riverside County early Friday.

A police spokesman said he believed there was a small leak in the Prado Dam, near the town of Corona, but the Army Corps of Engineers, which operates and oversees the dam, disputed that.

"We're releasing water," said Fred Otto Egelar, spokesman for the Los Angeles district of the Corps of Engineers. "It's being retained behind the dam, and we're making normal releases at this moment."

Officers were evacuating about 330 homes and 500 other homes east of the dam, Police Sgt.

washed out three bridges.

The raging San Gabriel River cut off ground access to the approximately 135 permanent residents of Follows Camp, in the forest about 30 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles.

"We're completely separated from the rest of the world," said Lt. Tim Dowling of the Follows Camp Volunteer Fire Department. The flooding washed out half of the community's fire equipment, including a fire engine that fell into the river.

Besides flying in food and medical supplies, the rescuers also flew out a heart patient needing special medication and a 10-year-old boy who had been visiting friends when he was trapped in the camp. The series of storms that pummeled the state eased up earlier in the week.

Jerry Rodriguez said. The area is about 50 miles east-southeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Water was increasing behind the dam and "the dam is not able to support it, so for precautionary reasons we're evacuating the homes," he said. "My understanding is there's a leak in the dam."

The National Weather Service issued a flood watch along the Santa Ana River in both Riverside and Orange counties. An evacuation center was set up at Corona High School, and residents could be seen on television reports jamming the few streets out of the evacuated neighborhoods.

To the north, rescuers flew in food and medical supplies Thursday to more than 100 people trapped in a small Angeles National Forest mountain community

States turn to Europe for cheaper medicines

MONTPELIER, Vt. — States looking to Canada for steep discounts on prescription drug prices are increasingly turning to Europe for deals now that the Canadian government is considering shutting off the southern flow.

Illinois and three other states already help their residents buy prescriptions from such places as the United Kingdom and Ireland, a process dubbed reimportation because many of the drugs are made in the United States. The new Democratic majorities in the Vermont Legislature want to join the club.

The move is intended to ensure that customers can get cheaper drugs even if one country decides to stop exports, said Caleb Weaver, project manager of I-SaveRx, the initiative launched by Illinois and now available in Wisconsin, Missouri and Kansas.

From The Associated Press



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Nevada residents await receding waters

The Associated Press

OVERTON, Nev. — Cynthia Nelson, schoolteacher and mom, nervously waited early Thursday for word she could return home after fleeing in the dead of night as the Muddy River raged out of control.

The wife of the volunteer fire chief in this small farming and ranching community about 50 miles northeast of Las Vegas heard that her home had fared better than most. Still, Nelson was

worried.

"Until you can see it yourself, you don't know," said Nelson, 44.

For two days the residents of Overton had been preparing for the worst, filling sandbags and trying to shore up drainage areas as the Muddy River surged with excessive run-off from recent Western storms and flooded dozens of area homes.

At the height of the roaring river waters, county officials said some 250 homes were evacuated

in Overton and the nearby communities of Logandale, Moapa and Glendale. Authorities were unsure how many were flooded and said it was too early for damage estimates. None of the homes in the area was thought to have been destroyed, and there were no injuries.

Gov. Kenneth Guinn declared a flood emergency in Clark County and headed to Overton to survey the damage. As residents began the cleanup, authorities warned of sewer and sanitation problems.

Couple dies after high winds destroy mobile home

The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Ga. — A couple was killed when heavy winds tore through their southwest Georgia neighborhood, destroying their mobile home and two other homes. Five people suffered minor injuries.

Authorities found the bodies of John and Dorris

White after the storm hit Thursday night. They were thrown about 50 yards from their home in Arlington, 35 miles southwest of Albany.

Police Chief Casey Taylor said wind ripped the trailer's frame from its cinder-block foundation and tossed it nearly a quarter mile, scattering pieces of roof in a tree. "We didn't have any warning. I don't believe they knew what happened," Taylor said Friday.

Texas lawyer sues student spammer

Attorney files suit against one of world's largest unsolicited e-mail proprietors

BY BRANDI GRISSOM

The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — The state attorney general filed a lawsuit against a 22-year-old college student and his business partner, accusing them of illegally sending hundreds of thousands of unsolicited, misleading e-mails.

Ryan Pitlyak, a student at the University of Texas at Austin, heads the fourth-largest spamming operation in the world, Attorney General Gregg Abbott said.

The lawsuit filed Thursday alleges that Pitlyak and Mark Trotter, his 40-year-old business partner from Encinitas, California,

have been sending the e-mails since at least Sept. 1, 2003.

"We want to make clear that these defendants we are suing today and any other illegal spammers in the state of Texas can't hide behind a computer screen any longer," Abbott said in filing the state's first e-mail spamming lawsuit.

Lin Hughes, attorney for Pitlyak and Trotter, said her clients took great pains to make sure the e-mails were legal.

The lawsuit seeks millions of dollars for violations of the federal Controlling Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003, known as the CAN-SPAM Act. The act made il-

legal sending unsolicited e-mails that could mislead recipients.

The lawsuit also alleges violations of Texas laws prohibiting unsolicited e-mail and deceptive trade practices. It asks a judge to stop LeadPlex Inc., LeadPlex LLC and PayPerAction LLC from sending e-mails.

Pitlyak and Trotter began PayPerAction in 2002 and have operated the business under at least 250 different names, Abbott said.

According to the lawsuit, the e-mails contained official-looking subject lines such as "Re: your past due bills" and "Urgent: Household Loan Memorandum: Please Read." When recipients clicked on links in the e-mails,

they were informed that personal information that Pitlyak and Trotter sold to other companies for as much as \$28 per reference, the lawsuit alleges.

Pitlyak and Trotter sold their interests in the LeadPlex and PayPerAction to Hong Kong-based Eastmark Technology Limited, which is also named in the lawsuit. In March, their attorney said, Hughes said Pitlyak and Trotter still act as consultants to Eastmark.

Hughes said her clients did not violate the CAN-SPAM Act. She said each e-mail contains a disclaimer indicating the purpose is to gather information and a link allowing recipients to unsubscribe to the e-mails, as required by the act.

God and government

WASHINGTON — An atheist who tried to remove "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance says a federal judge has authority to stop the invocation prayer at President Bush's inauguration.

Michael Newdow told U.S. District Judge James E. Boies that plans to include a minister invoking Jesus in the Jan. 20 ceremony violate the Constitution by forcing him to accept unwanted religious beliefs.

Bates was expected to issue a ruling in the case on Friday.

Boeing groups

CHICAGO — Boeing Co. will end production of the 717 jet, its smallest passenger plane, next year, and plans to charge \$615 million against earnings before taxes related to that and the loss of a \$23 billion bid to supply refueling tankers to the U.S. Air Force.

The big Chicago-based airplane manufacturer said Friday the charge will wipe out 48 cents a share for the fourth-quarter and full-year 2004 results, scheduled to be released on Feb. 2, 2005.

The company will take a charge amounting to about \$340 million, or 27 cents per share, before taxes due to the 2004 production of the 717's successor in 2006.

Possible grant raise

WASHINGTON — To ease tuition sticker-shock, President Bush wants to raise the maximum Pell Grant award by \$500 a year over the next five years and fix a persistent shortfall in the nation's chief college aid program.

The White House said the plan would put the maximum grant at \$4,550 by 2010, up 12 percent from the \$4,050 offered today.

The White House declined to say whether the president wants to increase the grants received by more than 5 million low-income students, but congressional and education officials familiar with the details of his proposal said Bush will call for raising the Pell Grant award \$100 a year for five years.

Defending PR choice

WASHINGTON — Investigations by the Education Department and Congress are forcing the Bush administration to defend its use of a public relations company to promote the president's schools agenda.

The department has committed at least \$1.3 million to the company, including \$340,000 that went to a business run by conservative commentator and columnist Armstrong Williams. He produced ads with Education Secretary Rod Paige that promoted the No Child Left Behind Act.

Williams was also ordered to provide media time to Paige and to persuade other blacks in media to talk about the law, records show.

Williams said Paige saw the arrangement was legal, so some lawmakers and media critics contend it amounted to propaganda.

From The Associated Press

Bush has doubts about charged phrases

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush says he now sees that tough talk can have an "unintended consequence."

During a round-table interview with reporters from the Portland Press Herald and 13 other newspapers, the president, who not long ago declined to identify any mistakes he'd made during his first term, expressed misgivings for two of his most famous expressions: "Bring 'em on," in reference to Iraqis attacking U.S. troops, and how to get Osama bin Laden "dead or alive."

"Sometimes, words have consequences you

don't intend them to mean," Bush said Thursday. "Bring 'em on" is the classic example, when I was really trying to rally the troops and make it clear to them that I fully understood, you know, what a great job they were doing. And those words had an unintended consequence. It kind of, some interpreted it to be defiance in the face of danger. That certainly wasn't the case."

On other points, Bush said:

■ He wants Congress to approve major changes in the Social Security program before the end of May. Many Democrats and some Republicans in Congress oppose Bush's proposal, which may entail steep reductions in future benefits.

■ Baseball's new policy for steroids and other drugs is "a very strict policy and I want to congratulate both parties."

■ Four years as president have changed him. "They say my hair is grayer."

On July 2, 2003, two months after he had declared an end to major combat in Iraq, Bush promised U.S. forces would stay until the creation of a free government there. To those who would attack U.S. forces in an attempt to deter that mission, Bush said, "My answer is, Bring 'em on."

In the week after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Bush was asked if he wanted bin Laden, the terrorist leader blamed for the attacks, dead.

"I want justice," Bush said. "And there's an old poster out West. I recall, that said, 'Wanted, Dead or Alive.'"

Recalling that remark, Bush told the reporters: "I can remember getting back to the White House, and Laura said, 'Why did you do that for?' I said, 'Well, it was just an expression that came out. I didn't rehearse it.'"

"I don't know you'd call it a regret, but it certainly is a lesson that a president must be mindful of, that the words that you sometimes say... I speak plainly sometimes, but you've got to be mindful of the consequences of the words."

'Theory' textbook disclaimer creates controversy

Judge orders removal of evolution warning label issued by Georgia school board

BY DOUG GROSS

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Since 2002, Dr. Kenneth Miller has been upset that biology textbooks he has written are slapped with a warning sticker by the time they appear in suburban Atlanta schools.

Evolution, the stickers say, is "a theory, not a fact."

"What it tells students is that we're certain of everything else in this book except evolution," said Miller, a professor of biology at Brown University, who with Joseph S. Levine has authored three texts for high schoolers.

On Thursday, Miller — along with fellow teachers and scientists — cheered a federal judge's ruling that ordered the Cobb County school board to immediately remove the stickers and never again hand them out in any form.

"Obviously, this is quite a victory for good science education," said Benjamin Z. Freed, an anthropology professor at Atlanta's Emory University and chairman

This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully, and critically considered.

Approved by

Cobb County Board of Education

Thursday, March 28, 2002

A federal judge in Atlanta ordered a suburban Atlanta school system Thursday to remove stickers, which refer to evolution as "a theory, not a fact," from its high school biology textbooks, saying the disclaimers were an unconstitutional endorsement of religion.

of Georgia Citizens for Integrity in Science Education.

But some parents and religious conservatives decried the ruling as another in a string of what they called activist judges overruling the wishes of elected officials — often on matters of religion.

The school district just north of

Atlanta appointed the stickers after more than 2,000 parents complained the textbooks presented evolution as fact, without mentioning rival ideas about the beginnings of life.

During four days of testimony in federal court last November, the school system defended the warning stickers as a show of tol-

erance, not religious activism as some parents claimed. Its attorneys argued the school board had made good-faith efforts to address questions that inevitably arise during the teaching of evolution.

The stickers read, "This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

Scientists, several of whom testified in the case, say the sticker confuses the scientific term "theory" with the word's common usage and inappropriately combines science with personal religious beliefs.

The school board issued a statement saying members are disappointed by the ruling and are meeting with lawyers to decide whether to appeal. The Cobb school system has 30 days to appeal.

IN THE WORLD

Malaria concerns hit tsunami area

BY EDWARD HARRIS

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Masked workers with mosquito-killing spray guns began moving through refugee camps Friday in tsunami-battered Aceh province, trying to prevent an outbreak of malaria.

"Short-term, we're trying to prevent an epidemic," said Richard Allan, director of the Mentor Initiative, a public health group that fights malaria epidemics. "And it may already be too late."

The death toll from the Dec. 26 earthquake-triggered tsunami has topped 157,000. Two-thirds of the deaths occurred in Indonesia's Aceh province.

Allan warns that 100,000 more people could die of malaria around

Aceh if quick action isn't taken. A successful spraying effort would drastically minimize that risk.

The pools of salt water created by the tsunami have been diluted by seasonal rains into a brackish water, creating the perfect breeding ground for mosquitos.

A fumigation operation started Friday with a small team of sprayers planning to cover up to eight refugee camps around the provincial capital of Banda Aceh. The main spraying effort won't begin for at least two days because most of the insecticide has been held up by bureaucratic delays in Jakarta, where three planeloads of insecticide are waiting for clearance to fly to Banda Aceh, he said.

Poor health and tsunami-related stress has weakened the immune systems of the displaced people,



Members of the Indonesian Ministry of Health fumigate a refugee camp Friday in Lhoknga, on the outskirts of Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

leaving them abnormally susceptible to mosquito-borne illness, said Allan.

In Sri Lanka, more than 25,000 people displaced by the Dec. 26 tsunami left relief camps in the past 24 hours to return to rebuild their villages, the United Nations' refugee agency said Friday.

"Some want to return because

their houses were partially damaged and some want to return to where their house was to be sure that they are recognized" as the owner, said Neil Wright, an official with the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees.

U.S. helicopters flew into eastern Sri Lanka Friday, ferrying some 30 tons of relief materials, including fresh fruits and vegetables. "We're concentrating on the eastern areas where many people were stranded after their roads and bridges were destroyed," said Sri Lankan Wing Commander Senaka Dharmawardene, who is in charge of coordinating aid in the eastern region. "The Americans" have been very helpful."

The tsunami killed 31,000 people in Sri Lanka and rendered 800,000 people homeless, Wright said more than 425,000 still remain in refugee camps.

Indonesia is sensitive over foreign involvement in the humanitarian effort, especially from Chinese troops, and reiterated Friday that it wants foreign troops out of the country by late March. However, the United States, which has thousands of forces in the region, said it has not been given any such deadline.

U.N. leader pitches disasters warning system

The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — Tsunamis, earthquakes, hurricanes and volcanoes pose a greater threat to man than war and terrorism, and an early warning system is needed to alert the three billion people who live in high-risk areas, the U.N. humanitarian chief said.

"This is an underestimated problem in the world," Jan Egeland said Thursday. "Of course, security and terrorism and war are big problems. Natural disasters are much bigger problems if you talk about the number of people affected."

Egeland said 250 million lives are "devastated every year because of natural disasters."

He was speaking ahead of next week's U.N.-sponsored World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, where more than 4,000 people from 140 countries will discuss a global warning system, which is expected to be up and running this year.

"The next tsunami may come in 100 years. Next year, however, there will be many terrible hurricanes that will affect as many people and ... we do not have good enough early warning systems. Cuba has a great one. Haiti has none. We have to have an international system," he said.

The U.N. conference will open immediately after the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the earthquake that struck Kobe and the surrounding area on Jan. 17, 1995, killing more than 6,400 people. There will be a special session on lessons learned from the Dec. 26 earthquake off Indonesia that sparked a tsunami that killed more than 150,000 people in 11 countries.

Egeland said it was "mind boggling" that for hours experts knew the tsunami was approaching shorelines with millions of people remained on beaches. "As the first tidal wave receded, thousands of children ran down to collect fish which were on shore ... and they were nearly all of them taken and killed or missing," he said.

Jakarta bomb threat

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The British and Thai embassies in Indonesia were closed Friday after an anonymous bomb threat.

Police received the threats via mobile phone text message from an unidentified person who might be working with Malaysian terror suspects Azahari bin Husin and Nordin Mohamed Top, said National Police Chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar.

The threats warned that the embassies would be targeted at 10 p.m. Thursday or 10 a.m. Friday, police said. Both deadlines passed without any explosion.

"It is not impossible that the threats against the embassies were just aimed at diverting our attention ... while their target is another place," Bachtiar said, adding that police were still trying to track down the sender.

Faye Belnis, British Embassy press officer, said officials on Friday also closed a consulate office near the embassy. She said officials haven't decided when the offices would reopen.



A British Embassy official inspects razor wire circling the compound in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Friday. The embassy in the world's most populous Muslim country remained closed Friday morning following an anonymous bomb threat against the diplomatic post and the nearby Thai embassy.

Poland OKs shooting down hijacked planes

BY VANESSA GERA

The Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — A new Polish law gives authorities the power to order hijacked airliners shot down — a post-Sept. 11 measure that underscores growing terrorism concerns in Europe but drew criticism when enacted in Germany. The law allows the defense minister or air force chief to order the downing of civilian or military aircraft whose hijackers refuse to land.

"This is certainly one of the hardest decisions which would have to be taken if such an event took place," Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski said.

The law, which took effect Thursday, was introduced to meet "threats in the current world following the Sept. 11 tragedy," said Defense Ministry spokesman Col. Leszek Laszka. "The fact we have never had such problems does not mean that we should not be prepared."

As a staunch U.S. ally in the war on Iraq and leader of the post-9/11 international security force stationed near Baghdad, Poland has been threatened by extremist Islamic groups with revenge attacks on its soil. Another possible danger could come from Chechen separatists hijacking Russian airliners, many of which pass over Poland and Germany.

Russian law does not say whether authorities there can shoot down hijacked planes. However, a new anti-terrorism bill approved by parliament last month — but criticized as giving excessive power to authorities — gives the go-ahead.

German President Horst Koehler reluctantly signed a measure similar to Poland's into law Wednesday, saying the country's constitution bars the government from killing its citizens even if it saves the lives of others, and urging a high court review.

Harry mulls Jewish invite

LONDON — Prince Harry, who provoked outrage by wearing a swastika armband to a private party, is considering invitations from Jewish groups to visit the Auschwitz death camp, a royal official said Friday.

The invitations "will be given due consideration, but there are no plans at the moment," said a spokeswoman at the office of Harry's father, Prince Charles.

The spokeswoman stressed that Harry would not attend ceremonies on Jan. 27 commemorating the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex, although the Simon Wiesenthal Center had urged him to do so.

Harry apologized for "a poor choice of costume" after royal officials learned that The Sun newspaper was about to print a picture of the prince in a Nazi uniform on its front page Thursday.

The furor rumbled on Friday, with more caustic remarks about Harry's intelligence and sensitivity. But some commentators, pleading that the prince was just a 20-year-old trying to live a normal life, contended that the fuss was overblown.

Nigerians protest police

LAGOS, Nigeria — An angry mob burned down a police station in southwestern Nigeria after police shot dead a driver at a checkpoint, a police spokesman said Friday.

The driver was killed Thursday on the outskirts of Benin City, a police spokesman Fatai Kiyom.

Nigerian newspapers reported the incident occurred after the driver refused to pay a 40-naira (29-cent) bribe at the checkpoint, in an allegation Kiyom would neither confirm nor deny.

Bush's EU visit

BRUSSELS, Belgium — European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said Friday the upcoming visit of President Bush to the European Union would signal a "relaunch" of trans-Atlantic ties aiming to resolve trade disputes and disagreements over Iraq.

Barroso said he was "looking forward" to Bush's visit Feb. 22 to the EU head office, after meeting with U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist.

First, making his first visit to EU headquarters, agreed, saying Bush was "intransigent" in Washington to renew ties, putting aside vehement disagreements over Bush's decision to oust Saddam Hussein.

N. Korea nuke talks

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea on Friday told a visiting U.S. congressional delegation that it is ready to return to six-party nuclear talks and would "rethink" its stance, Seoul said, as a "friend" if Washington doesn't slander the rule of leader Kim Jong Il. The overture came shortly after the bipartisan congressional delegation concluded talks with senior communist officials in Pyongyang. The delegation called the meeting an "overwhelming success," Seoul said, in Seoul that North Korea appeared ready to negotiate within weeks.

From The Associated Press

From The Associated Press

Poll: Euro switch still difficult

Survey reveals struggles to replace old currencies

BY RAF CASERT

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Three years after the introduction of euro cash, almost half the citizens in the 12 nations that use the currency still struggle to replace francs, marks and lire in their hearts and minds, a survey released Thursday showed.

Irish male teenagers are most at home with the new currency, according to the poll commissioned by the European Union's head office, while 30-something women from the Italian countryside still hanker for their lost lira.

The survey found 16 percent of citizens expressed "a lot of difficulty" with the euro and 33 percent said they had "some difficulty" paying with the multinational cash.

Some 52 percent of citizens in the euro-zone nations have "no difficulty at all" in using the new currency, up one percentage point from a similar survey last year, the rounded figures showed.

The Eurobarometer poll highlighted big national differences.

In Ireland, 78 percent had no difficulty, followed by Luxembourg with 71 percent and Greece with 69 percent.

In contrast, citizens of the currency bloc's three largest nations struggled the most. Only 35 percent of Italians were fully at ease with the euro, 40 percent of French and 56 percent of Germans.

Across the bloc, 57 percent of men had no problems using the euro, compared to 45 percent of women. The 15-24 age group was most at ease with the poll showed, and those ages 25-39 were less happy, the poll showed.

City dwellers generally had less difficulty than those from rural areas.

Counterfeit notes rose in 2004

BERLIN — The number of fake euro notes reported to authorities spiked in 2004 to 81,000 from 50,000 the year before, as criminals became more familiar with the shared currency, Germany's central bank said Thursday.

Even greater was the surge in reports of faked coins, which rose to about 51,000 from 16,500 the year before, the Bundesbank said.

In 2002, the fake euro currency was introduced, the bank reported 14,000 forged notes.

Overall, the counterfeit currency accounted for \$8.1 million in 2004.

From The Associated Press

In their day-to-day shopping, just 25 percent said they still did most of their mental calculations in their defunct national currencies, but for exceptional purchases such as houses or cars, 49 percent still think in guilders, francs, pesetas and the other old monies.

More than 90 percent of those asked said they were now at ease distinguishing the different denominations of euro banknotes, 72 percent with euro coins.

Sixty percent said they would not mind if the 1 cent and 2 cent coins were dropped from circulation, as some EU governments are considering. Only 29 percent want the 1 euro coin replaced by a bill.

The European Commission expressed surprise that only 38 percent of citizens were aware that they can use bank cards for purchases and cash withdrawals in other euro-zone nations without facing extra fees.

The poll was based on telephone interviews with around 1,000 people in each of the 12 euro-zone nations. It carried an average margin of error of 4.4 percentage points.

recent weeks, following media reports that the company was paying two members of the German federal parliament and four regional legislators.

Landlord OKs love

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Noisy lovemaking is no cause for eviction so long as it's done in the daytime, a Swedish landlord said Thursday.

The Tunabyggen housing company in Borlänge, 137 miles northwest of Stockholm, made the decision after the neighbors of one amorous couple complained about their afternoon delights.

The company, which runs the block of apartments, said lovemaking is part of normal family life and not grounds for eviction.

From The Associated Press

Zeppelin completes first flight in Japan

The Associated Press

TOKYO — An enormous white zeppelin described as the world's largest successfully completed its maiden flight Friday in Japan.

The German-made 247-foot airship wafted into blue skies above the western port city of Kobe on Friday morning for half an hour before embarking on a five-hour flight to Nagoya in central Japan, said Yoshitami Sato, an employee of the zeppelin's owner, Nippon Airship Corporation.

It was shipped by sea from its maker, Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik, in Friedrichshafen, Germany, in July and arrived in Kobe last week, echoing a flight 75 years ago of the LZ 127 Graf Zeppelin from Friedrichshafen to Tokyo.

The ship is destined for sightseeing and advertising flights in Japan and a starting role at the 2005 world's fair in Aichi prefecture.



EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY/AP

This artist's rendering shows the Huygens probe with its parachute open as it descends through the clouds of the Saturn moon Titan.

European probe lands on Titan

Scientists have waited 7 years for craft to arrive at Saturn's moon

BY MELISSA EDDY

The Associated Press

DARMSTADT, Germany — A European space probe plunged into the hazy, mysterious atmosphere of Saturn's moon Titan on Friday, and elated mission controllers said it had opened its parachute to slow its descent as it gathers data.

The Huygens probe had successfully restarted its systems and the mission, which could provide clues to how life arose on Earth, was going well, said Roberto Lo Verda, a spokesman for the European Space Agency.

"It has entered the atmosphere, and entered it correctly," Lo Verda said. "We know the batteries are switched on, the parachute has deployed and it has slowed down sufficiently."

Mission officials — who have waited seven years for Huygens to reach its destination — had tears in their eyes as the first signal was picked up, indicating that the probe had successfully powered up dormant systems and begun transmitting to its mother ship, the international Cassini spacecraft.

ESA's science director, David Southwood, said the mission had successfully passed a difficult and critical step. "We didn't promise we could do this. We were pushing the limit just to do this," Southwood said.

Huygens was spun off from Cassini on Christmas Eve to begin its free-fall toward Titan, the first moon other than the Earth's to be explored by spacecraft.

Named after Titan's discoverer, the 17th-century Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens, the probe carries instruments to explore what Titan's atmosphere is made of and find out whether it has the cold seas of liquid methane and ethane that have been theorized by scientists.

Its slow parachute descent to the moon's reddish surface was expected to take about 2½ hours, during which it will use a special camera and instruments to collect information on wind speeds and the makeup of Titan's atmosphere.

The data will be transmitted back to Cassini, which will relay it to NASA's Deep Space Network in California and on to ESA controllers in Darmstadt, Germany.

Big cocaine bust

VIENNA, Austria — Police have seized 300 pounds of cocaine to what the interior minister on Friday described as a big blow to organized crime.

Police detained five members of a multinational drug-dealing gang with international links and seized the drugs — with a street value of about involving U.S. and other foreign authorities, the Austria Press Agency reported.

The drugs were stored in a warehouse in the southern city of Graz and the dealers had planned to distribute the drugs from there, officials said.

6.6 tons of hashish

ATHENS, Greece — Police seized 6.6 tons of hashish after

raiding a warehouse near the capital's main port of Piraeus, authorities said Friday.

One man was arrested during the raid late Thursday by police and Finance Ministry fraud officers at the warehouse in the Keratsini area.

Greece is a major transit point for drug smuggling into the European Union.

WW to end payments

FRANKFURT, Germany — German automaker Volkswagen AG said Thursday it would end its practice of keeping employees on its payroll when they're elected to public office, amid criticism that it had paid six top legislators under the policy.

The practice, which is legal and isn't limited to Volkswagen, has drawn increasing scrutiny in



A zeppelin flies over the site of the Aichi Exposition near Nagoya, Japan, on Friday. The German-made, 247-foot airship wafted into blue skies above the western port city of Kobe on Friday morning for half an hour before beginning a five-hour flight to Nagoya.

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YOUR MONEY

Consumers deal with holiday debt hangover

BY EILEEN ALT POWELL
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — As those holiday credit card bills roll in this month, many people have a deep sense of discomfort.

But credit experts say that instead of feeling overwhelmed by their bloated balances, consumers should use the occasion to get a handle once and for all on their credit card debt.

That could be a bit harder this year because holiday spending was so strong, warned David C. Jones, president of the Association of Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies, based in Richmond, Va.

"There was a huge amount of spending this Christmas," Jones noted. "That's good for retailers, but maybe not so good for consumers because there can be serious issues as people get themselves back together financially."

He said two early warning signs of trouble are when consumers can't afford the minimum monthly payments on all their cards or fear they can make pay the minimum for months to come.

As a result, he said, many consumers "worry there's no way out."

But Jones and other credit experts say there are steps consumers can take themselves or with help from professional credit counselors to deal with their debts.

Susan Shain, of Bethpage, N.Y., sought help from the nonprofit Consolidated Credit Counseling Services Inc. of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., when she was overwhelmed by credit card debt. She said a divorce several years ago set her back financially while the day-to-day costs of raising two daughters kept rising.

"I was using my credit cards a lot,"



People line up to buy items at a Toys R Us store in Times Square, New York, on Nov. 26 during one of the busiest shopping days of the year. Now some consumers are panicking as credit card bills from the holidays roll in. Experts suggest consumers use this opportunity to finally take control of their credit card debt.

Shain said. "Part of it was covering necessities. But mostly it was to make sure the kids were OK, because I just didn't want the situation to affect my daughters."

She estimates that some \$9,000 of her debt was to cover gifts and other holiday spending over the years.

Shain now works two jobs, full time as a surgical technician and part time at a gourmet food store, with part of her income going to pay down her debt.

Shain admits she still sometimes overpends at holidays and that "I tend to get

stressed" when the bills arrive in January. But now she handles the situation by asking for extra shifts and "I pay the balances off as fast as I can."

Howard Dvorkin, president of Consolidated Credit, said many people have so many credit cards they don't know how much they owe overall. He offers a step-by-step approach to help consumers work on the problem:

■ First, list all your bills on a single sheet of paper in three columns: who you owe, how much and the minimum monthly payment.

■ Then look at your earnings and spending. "With earnings, look at every aspect," Dvorkin said. "Can you adjust your [tax] withholding to get a little more in your paycheck each month? Do you need to find a part-time job to supplement your income?"

On the spending side, "make sure every penny is going to the right places," Dvorkin said. He noted that someone with a \$3 a day latte habit can save several hundred dollars a year by simply changing to regular coffee or not consuming as much food bills by shopping at discount stores rather than more expensive neighborhood grocers.

"Most people can probably bring down their expenses by 10 percent to 15 percent and not even notice," he said.

■ The final step is to take that extra money and apply it to credit card balances. Dvorkin, who is the author of the soon-to-be-published "Credit Hell: How to Dig Out of Debt," suggests consumers first go after the balance on the card charging the highest interest rate.

"You should be paying at least three times the minimum on that one," he said.

He also said it's important for consumers to switch to cash and debit cards until their debt is under control.

"If you're paying down debt and, at the same time, charging more, you're like a hamster on an exercise wheel running around in a circle," Dvorkin said.

Both Dvorkin and Jones said consumers who feel they need help should consult credit counselors, who can help them work out budget plans or get them into debt consolidation programs. Dvorkin's site is www.consolidatedcredit.org. Two associations of nonprofit agencies maintain Web sites: The National Foundation for Credit Counseling at www.nfcc.org and Jones' Association of Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies at www.alcca.org.

THURSDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY									
INDEXES									
	52-week								
	High	Low	High	Low	Net	% Chg	% YTD	52-week	
Dow Jones Industrial	10,650.41	1,058.40	10,550.83	-111.56	-1.05	-2.57	-6.56		
S&P 500	3,023.96	2,743.46	2,953.57	-53.61	-1.49	-6.96	+17.06		
Nasdaq Composite	2,177.68	2,059.89	2,125.70	-25.77	-1.19	-1.57	+23.87		
Dow Jones Transpor	7,717.18	6,211.33	7,028.67	-69.57	-0.66	-3.05	+1.31		
NYSE Composite	1,458.58	1,158.74	1,400.69	-15.62	-1.06	-2.35	+18.10		
Russell 2000	2,101.68	1,750.82	2,050.56	-51.87	-1.65	-4.82	-1.83		
S&P 500	1,217.00	1,090.72	1,177.45	-16.25	-0.86	-2.84	+4.01		
S&P 500	546.29	546.29	546.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Russell 2000	656.11	515.90	610.13	-3.85	-0.59	-6.36	+4.05		
Dow Jones	12,248.32	10,368.52	11,575.15	-11.75	-0.11	-3.31	+4.88		

NYSE				AMEX				NASDAQ			
Most Active (\$1.00 or more)				Most Active (\$1.00 or more)				Most Active (\$1.00 or more)			
Name	Vol	00	Last Chg	Name	Vol	00	Last Chg	Name	Vol	00	Last Chg
Alcoa	402,150	1.40	+0.05	SPDR	3,338,520	117.62	-0.50	Nasdaq100	94,689	26.07	-0.31
Amazon	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	SPDR	3,338,520	117.62	-0.50	S&P500	918,816	4.66	+0.31
Overseas	207,788	1.15	-0.01	DOW	988,121	26.77	-0.31	Microsoft	80,221	26.77	-0.31
Boeing	245,729	16.95	-0.10	DOW	988,121	26.77	-0.31	Philippines	1,046	1.04	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	Saudi Arabia	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Verizon	21,561	15.40	-0.10	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	South Korea	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Intel	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	Switzerland	1,014	1.01	-0.01
AMD	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	Thailand	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	Taiwan	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United Kingdom	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
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Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
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Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
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Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
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Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	United States	1,014	1.01	-0.01
Microsoft	1,014,417	24.13	-1.00	S&P	1,014,417						

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS									
	High	Low	High	Low	Net	% Chg	% YTD	52-week	
Alcoa	1.40	1.35	1.40	1.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Amazon	24.13	23.13	24.13	23.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Boeing	16.95	16.85	16.95	16.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
General Dynamics	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Hercules	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Lockheed Martin	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Northrop	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Raytheon	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Rockwell	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Textron	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
United Technologies	37.13	37.13	37.13	37.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Dollar bills	\$1,345.34
British pound	1,315.31
Japanese yen (Jan. 15)	100.00
South Korean won (Jan. 14)	1,011.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	1,759.59
British pound	1,315.31
Dollar bills	1,345.34
Denmark (Krone)	1,021.01
Egypt (Pound)	1,315.31
France (Euro)	1,315.31
Germany (Euro)	1,315.31
Hong Kong (Dollar)	1,315.31
India (Rupee)	1,315.31
Indonesia (Rupiah)	1,315.31
Israel (Shekel)	1,315.31
Japan (Yen)	1,315.31
Kuwait (Dinar)	1,315.31
Malaysia (Ringgit)	1,315.31
Norway (Krone)	1,315.31
Philippines (Peso)	1,315.31
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	1,315.31
Singapore (Dollar)	1,315.31
South Korea (Won)	1,315.31
Switzerland (Franc)	1,315.31
Taiwan (New Dollar)	1,315.31
Thailand (Baht)	1,315.31
Turkey (Lira)	1,315.31
United Kingdom (Pound)	1,315.31
United States (Dollar)	1,315.31
United States (Dollar)	1,315.31
United States (Dollar)	1,315.31

Cents and Sensibility

Money tip of the day

Retirement relocation

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — If you're getting ready to retire, you may feel the lure of buying a new home. Maybe you're hoping to relocate to a warmer climate, or closer to your children and grandchildren.

But buying a home after retirement isn't the same as buying one in your younger years, writes Mary L. Gibson, a certified financial planner in San Juan Bautista, Calif. She and other members of the Garrett Financial Network compiled financial advice in the new book, "Just Give Me the Answer."

Your new home should fit the changes you'll be experiencing in your lifestyle, finances and physical health. It should be suitable for you now, as well as years down the road — AARP reports that many people age 65 and older plan to stay in the same house for the remainder of their lives.

Here are some things you might consider before relocating to retire:

- What size home do you need?
 - Do you need more space to house guests?
 - Is there enough extra room for storage or space-consuming hobbies?
 - How much yard work do you want to do?
 - How old is the home?
 - When will key features, such as the roof, need to be replaced?
 - How much will you pay in local and state taxes?
 - How does this compare with other communities where you might relocate?
 - What is the home's proximity to places you'll visit in the community?
 - Will you pay more for basic expenses compared with where you live now?
 - How close are you to major roads, bus stops and major transportation hubs, such as airports or train stations?
 - What is the weather like?
 - Will you need to worry about natural disasters such as hurricanes or wildfires?

PRECIOUS METALS

	London close
Gold	\$421.60
Silver	\$6.60

INTEREST RATES

	Prime rate
Discount rate	5.25
Federal funds market rate	4.50
3-month bill	2.34
30-year bond	4.69
Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America	

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Make it all smoke-free

I read "Smoke-free needed" (letter, Jan. 6), about secondhand smoke at the Top Hat Club in Mannheim, Germany. The letter writer also mentioned that smoke travels from the slot room to the dining room of the restaurant, thereby making for a very unpleasant dining experience.

All I can say is "Bless you, my child." I work in Winger's and the horrendous odor of years of smoking in the slot room is staggering. Employees and customers have to breathe it. The odor is in your clothes, your hair and in the pores of your skin.

In the Jan. 7 Stars and Stripes, the front page introduced the Army's new nonsmoking policy in the various lodging centers. Maybe someone with a lot of scrambled eggs on his hat can explain why there are so many smoking policies for the different services.

I feel I am more versed in what smoking does than the average smoker. I smoked three packs a day for 28 years.

I woke up one morning, decided that it was, threw them in the trash and never looked back. That was 14 years ago.

Next time you light up, stand in front of a mirror and watch yourself smoke that cigarette. And parents, after going through all you did to have children, I have never understood why you are so willing to put them in so much danger.

[U.S. Army Europe commander] Gen. B.B. Bell, it's time to protect not only your troops, but families and Department of Defense workers as well and make all Army facilities in Germany smoke-free. Make a few unannounced visits to post exchanges, commissaries, clubs or other facilities, and look at the twigs on the ground instead of in one of the provided containers.

Walter J. Irwin
 Ludwigshafen, Germany

Post-Christmas message

While looking over Christmas decorations, I looked over the 30 "holiday" cards that we received from friends and family. Only one card was a traditional card; it was a picture of the baby Christ

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns that are published in the newspaper, and asks letters on topics of importance in the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

Send your letters to:

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 Unit 29480 Postfach 1330
 APO AE 09211 64345 Griesheim

Via fax: (Country code +49) (0) 6155/601395;
 FAX: 06155/601396
 E-mail: letters@mail.strips.com

in a manger. Only five cards used the word "Christmas." The 24 remaining cards were generic "Happy Holiday" cards, or tacky jokes with a holiday theme. I find that disturbing.

Traditions are cultural links; they connect each generation with those in the past and those to come. Furthermore, American Christmas traditions have helped to bind our immigrant cultures together. Is it bad to celebrate the birth that, tradition says, started Western ideals of peace and love? Is it worthwhile to teach our children the ideals expressed in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," that love and generosity are more important than wealth?

If peace, love and generosity are worthy concepts, and if Christmas traditions extol peace, love and generosity, then even nonbelievers should uphold Christmas traditions. Those ideas are valuable even if you don't believe in the literal Christ. Even as a myth, the message of Christ has value for all of us. Even as a myth, Christmas traditions could link great-grandparents to your children's children.

For Christians, if you believe in the literal Christ, that his light brightened the world, shouldn't you celebrate his birth by name — Christmas?

Why be ashamed to say "Merry Christmas"? Why be reluctant to send traditional Christmas cards? Who are you afraid of offending? If you have peace, love and generosity in your heart, is it necessary to be blandly politically correct?

Please consider sending a traditional card next Christmas. I will always send traditional cards — even if they become so scarce that I have to draw them by hand.

Michael J. Leno
 Würzburg, Germany

Stripes not right on the right

I read Stars and Stripes nearly every day, and I must say, I am completely disturbed by the lack of respect this publication has for our president or anyone on his staff. Most of the time he is referred to only as "Bush." This is disrespectful and, as a publication that is sometimes the only news of home, lopsided opinions of Democratic oppression are truly becoming dull.

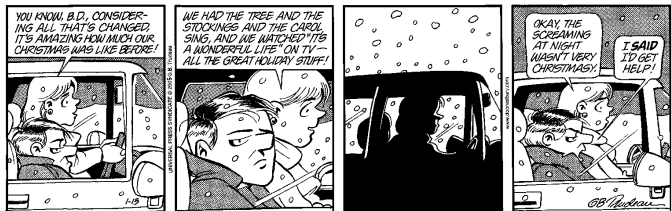
Stripes does not offer a Republican response to most of the unilateral topics discussed. It is nearly as biased as CNN in its unrelenting attacks on all things conservative or Republican. It must truly be a bitter pill to swallow after all the support and press Stripes gave Sen. John Kerry during the election. I can only imagine how long we will be overwhelmed with Stripes' support of Sen. Hillary Clinton, should she run (for president in 2008).

As a loyal reader of Stripes, I find it truly distasteful that only one side of the issues is ever completely discussed. Most Republican responses, if printed at all, are often taken out of context and twisted, contorted and manipulated to sway reader opinion. I must say, Stripes does this well.

I wish there would be more positive stories coming out of Stripes' coverage of the Iraq war. Stripes does a lot to crush troop morale with its constant bombardment of U.S. deaths at the hands of insurgents in Iraq. I cannot even begin to imagine what would happen to U.S. interests worldwide if we don't win this fight.

James Laing
 Camp Red Cloud, South Korea

BY GARRY TRUDEAU



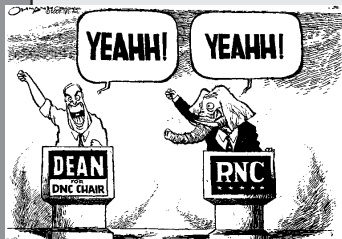
Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY

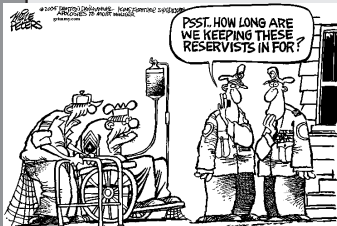


Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



JACK OHMAN/Tribune Media Services



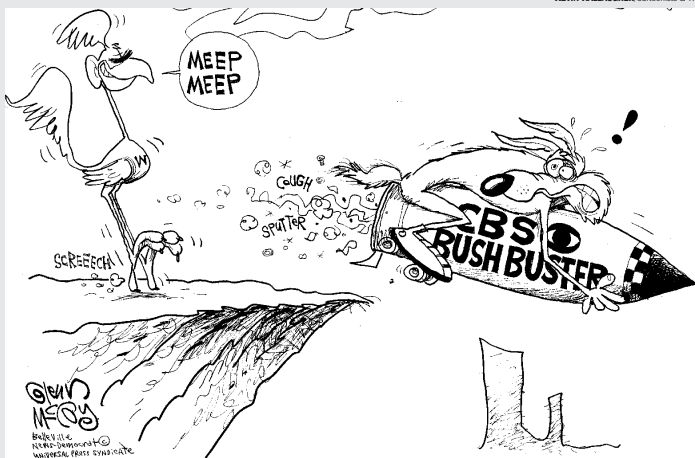
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KEVIN KALLAUGHER/Artists & Writers Syndicate



GLENN MCCOY/Universal Press Syndicate

18 Afghan holes

NC HIGH POINT — One man's efforts to help rebuild Afghanistan involve a few rounds of golf.

Paul McNeill Jr. briefly returned home to High Point to pick up shirts for the new Kabul Golf Club.

The main goal is to show people things are better under a modern democratic life-style," said McNeill, chief of administrative services for the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

During his time in Afghanistan, McNeill helped de-mine and renovate a course built in 1967, which was abandoned when the Soviets invaded the country in 1979.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Program investigation

TX HOUSTON — Accusations that the school district may be overstating the number of meals eaten in a government-subsidized breakfast program in order to boost revenue will be checked out by state investigators.

The Texas Department of Agriculture scheduled the weeklong audit for later this month. The accusations came amid increasing reimbursements to the Houston Independent School District from the federally subsidized meals program. Payments have grown by 50 percent to \$69 million since 2000.

The district and Aramark Corp., the private company that has managed its cafeterias since 1997, have repeatedly denied wrongdoing.

Slasher wounds two

NY NEW YORK — A man with a box cutter slashed a teenage girl on the wrist and then minutes later sliced a Sunday school teacher across her face while she walked to church, police said.

The 65-year-old teacher was walking in front of a grocery store around 12:45 p.m. Sunday when she was attacked by the man, who was armed with a box cutter or similar instrument, police said. The man slashed her face and fled without saying a word.

Minutes earlier and about a block away, a man matching the description of the teacher's attacker had slashed a 17-year-old girl, police said.

Electrocution death

OH CHARDON — A 17-year-old Amish boy was electrocuted trying to remove a power line that got tangled in his horse-drawn buggy's wheels, authorities said.

The boy drove over a power line Tuesday that had sagged down within a foot of the road after separating from a pole, authorities said.

The line got stuck in the wheels and stopped the buggy. The boy got out and grabbed the 4,800-volt line in an attempt to remove it from the wheels, the Geauga County Sheriff's office said. He died at the scene.

The boy's name was not released because his family had not all been notified, officials said.

Fire bomb influx

CA SACRAMENTO — Authorities safely disabled five fire-

bombs found at an office complex under construction Wednesday, the second time in a month explosive devices have been found at a construction site in the area.

FBI agent Keith Slotter said authorities believe eco-terrorists could be responsible, but they have no suspects. No one was injured in either incident.

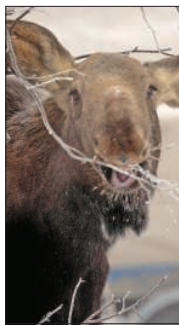
The bombs found at the office complex in Auburn on Wednesday matched three found Dec. 27 at an upscale subdivision under construction in nearby Lincoln. Both towns are northeast of Sacramento.

Campaigning for House

NV CARSON CITY — Nevada Secretary of State Dean Heller says he'll run for the U.S. House seat that fellow Republican Jim Gibbons is expected to vacate to run for governor. Heller's announcement follows comments last week by outgoing Assemblywoman Dawn Gibbons, who said she will seek her husband's seat if he decides to run for governor in 2006.

Political profanity

WI WAUSAU — A man protesting the war in Iraq with a sign that blended President Bush's



Icy snack

A moose calf chews on a frost-covered willow branch as it wanders around Anchorage, Alaska, neighborhood. Moose are commonly seen walking around Anchorage looking for an easy meal and keeping motorists and pedestrians alert.

name with a profanity was ticketed for using obscene language in public.

The protester said Monday he would fight the citation, calling it a violation of his constitutional right to free speech.

Police Chief William Brandimore said the city attorney's office was researching whether the ticket violated any constitutional rights, even though the city attorney had advised police to issue the original ticket late last week.

"We will do the right thing," Brandimore said.

Crossing guard layoffs

RI PROVIDENCE — A Superior Court judge ruled that Cranston Mayor Stephen Laffey can lay off the city's crossing guards, whose contract entitles them to full health benefits for working about one hour per day. Judge Daniel Procaccini said the city's ailing financial situation warranted the decision to furlough the guards.

More than she wanted

TN BARTLETT — All Milly Beck wanted was a Gap credit card. But after applying last month, she checked her mailbox this week and found her card — plus, 285 more exactly like it.

Beck called Gap's customer service. They were flabbergasted and apologetic.

Pete Tosches, a spokesman with G.E. Consumer Finance, the credit-card provider, said it was a glitch in the computer system and apparently happened only to Beck.

The Gap customer-service representative advised her to shred them all. She's getting a \$100 gift certificate for her trouble.

Alluring tropical island

HI HONOLULU — As temperatures drop across the nation, winter-weary sports fans will be treated to more than 60 hours of television images of swaying palm trees lining fairways, white sand bunkers and football stars sweating in the Hawaii sun.

It's all a strategic effort to lure more visitors to the islands.

The state is spending the bulk of its \$8 million annual sports marketing budget in January and February to host eight televised sporting events taking place on three islands.

"We're trying to portray Hawaii as a place that's much more multi-dimensional than just a sun and surf destination," said Frank Haas, vice president of marketing for the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Rising insurance prices

AZ PHOENIX — Gov. Janet Napolitano defended rising spending for health insurance for low-income Arizonans. The rising costs result primarily from growth in enrollment, which has climbed to more than 1 million people. The state now spends \$860 million, or 12 percent, of the state general fund on the program. Napolitano said she's more concerned that many Arizonans still lack insurance.



Angelia Smith, left, fights medieval style with Russ Thurston at Crookmore Park in Fort Smith, Ark. The pair are members of the Society for Creative Anachronism.



Johnny McGraw, of South Caddo Towing, uses a shovel and a rowboat to access a car for towing that was driven into a canal of Cross Lake in Shreveport, La. The driver was not injured in the accident.



A home of her own

Mattie Lawton, center, future owner of a Habitat for Humanity home, and family members break ground during a ceremony for the Miami Dade Housing Agency Hope VI project in Miami. Lawton is a former resident of the Scott Carver housing projects, which are being demolished.



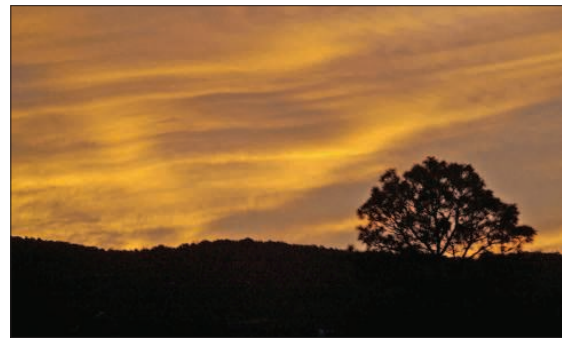
Sailing through winter Sailboats pass Fanueil Hall, background left, and the Boston waterfront during heavy snow. Weekly winter sailing on Saturdays is a tradition at several sailing clubs on Boston Harbor.



Seeing red A fighting bull makes a pass as Enrique Delgado performs during the Santa Maria Bullring's opening of the 2005 bullfighting season in La Gloria, Texas.



A little lift Tom Walsh of Keene, N.H., carries a sled containing his 21-month-old daughter, Thera, back to the top of a sledding hill in Keene.



Day is done, gone the sun The setting sun highlights the clouds and the tree line in High Rolls, N.M.

State eyes pension fraud

MA BOSTON — More than 30 people wrongfully collected a total of about \$1 million in pension benefits, according to a report by the State Retirement Board.

In one case, the family of a former judge continued to collect pension checks for years after his death and owes the state roughly \$100,000, the board said. State Treasurer Timothy Cahill said he will turn over any cases of suspected abuses of the pension system to the attorney general's office.

Spending spree busted

OK DURANT — Meals at the Bryan County Jail aren't what they used to be after authorities discovered an inmate chef with a gourmet palate spent more than twice as much on groceries as was budgeted.

Jail officials are cutting costs in the kitchen after authorities were billed \$13,000 for a month's worth of inmate food.

The monthly grocery bill at the jail is usually about \$5,000.

The menu is back to normal — chicken patties instead of chicken breasts — and food costs are under control, Ridgway said. Staff members are ordering the food and taking inventory.

Gas leak investigated

DC WASHINGTON — Fire officials said they're investigating whether teenagers trying to steal money from clothes dryers disrupted a gas line, leading to a deadly apartment building explosion. A fire and EMS spokesman said they may never know exactly what set off the gas leak.

The resulting explosion killed an 18-month-old girl and severely burned her mother. A firefighter was also hurt.

Barrier could be trouble

IL CHICAGO — Federal and state officials are conducting tests to determine whether a \$9 million electric barrier being built to keep the invasive Asian carp from reaching Lake Michigan could also harm boats in the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal.

Officials discussed safety issues after crewmembers spotted an arc flashing between barges that drifted into the barrier.

Judges allowed leeway

NH CONCORD — New Hampshire courts have joined most of the nation's judicial systems that allow judges clear authority to correct legal mistakes made by their colleagues and lawyers.

A year ago, a Bedford man sought a new trial on his six stalking convictions, arguing that his trial judge gave the jury bad instructions. The state Supreme Court refused but because neither the man nor his lawyer had raised the complaint at trial.

Until Nov. 1, court rules required lawyers to "preserve" a complaint at the trial level if they wanted to raise it later on appeal.

The new "plain error rule" allows a judge at any level of court to correct a mistake even if the par-

ties didn't bring it to the judge's attention.

Early voting catches on

WV CHARLESTON — Early voting in West Virginia was a hit in the 2004 general election, with more than 125,000 voters casting ballots before the polls opened on Election Day.

Early voting accounted for 16 percent of the total votes cast, a record 769,645 ballots, the Secretary of State's Office said.

SOS for oysters

MD ANNAPOLIS — The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is reviewing a petition to recognize the Chesapeake Bay's native oysters as "threatened" or "endangered," which likely would halt or limit harvesting of the struggling bivalves.

The petition was filed last week by Dieter Busch, a consultant who formerly headed an arm of the 15-state Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, a regulatory authority.

Busch acknowledged it's not likely that the native oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*, would meet the criteria to become an endangered species — a designation that deems an animal is on the verge of becoming extinct. Such a label would halt all harvesting of the oysters.

Sales tax pays off

WI GREEN BAY — The sales tax to repay loans used to finance the \$295 million renovation of Lambeau Field generated \$20.8 million in its fourth year, the most ever, the stadium district reported.

It's the third straight year the half-percent Brown County tax produced more money than the previous year. Brown County voters narrowly approved the sales tax in 2000.

Molestation alleged

RI PROVIDENCE — A Kent County Hospital anesthesiologist has had his license suspended as authorities investigate whether he molested a patient who was in surgery.

The state Health Department announced yesterday it had suspended Russel Aubin's license. Health director Patricia Nolan called him an immediate danger to the public. He'll have a hearing within 10 days.

The 39-year-old doctor allegedly molested a 21-year-old female patient while she was undergoing knee surgery from a soccer injury.

Pledge sitter wins fight

VA STAFFORD — Students will now be allowed to sit during the Pledge of Allegiance in Spotsylvania County schools.

The School Board's decision to change its policy, given final approval Monday night, was sparked by seventh-grader Gabriel Allen.

The 12-year-old student at Ni River Middle School said he didn't want to stand for the pledge because he disagrees with many U.S. government policies.

"The Bill of Rights clearly states that I have the right to free speech," Gabriel told the board.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



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FACES

Happy to be 'Arrested'

Comedian David Cross glad he joined cast of characters on TV comedy

BY TERRY MORROW

Scripts Howard

David Cross had a revelation three days into doing the second episode of "Arrested Development."

"I realized this is worth it," he recalls.

Not that he didn't think it going in, but Cross was glad for a little reassurance.

"I was never looking for this," says the standup comedian who plays the sexually ambiguous former therapist Tobias Fünke on the Emmy-winning comedy, now in its second season in the States.

The off-beat series, which follows the eccentric Bluth family in a faux-documentary style, also stars sitcom veterans Jason Bateman ("The Hogan Family," "Silver Spoons") and Jeffrey Tambor ("The Larry Sanders Show").

When he got the pilot-episode script, heavily recommended from friends, he already had his excuses ready on why he would not do a series.

"It wasn't anything against TV, but I didn't want to leave New York and work in Los Angeles. I wasn't interested in doing the ['Arrested'] characters they wanted me to do, but I gravitated to Tobias. He was so needy. I knew I could do a lot with him," Cross says.

Tobias couldn't be any different from him, and finding Cross on prime-time network television is a bit of a stretch, too. Most of his career has been devoted to edgy and politically incorrect comedy from doing standup.

For most of last season, Tobias was seeking a professional identity after his therapy practice ended. To give you an idea of Tobias's sensibilities,

he lost his license after giving CPR to a sunbather who didn't need it. Tobias also unsuccessfully explored work as a thespian and as a member of the Blue Man Group.

Tobias wants desperately to fit in. He's part of the show's dysfunctional Bluth family by marriage — wife Lindsay is played by Portia de Rossi — but his quirky attributes actually make him a perfect fit. In fact, Tobias is the kind of person Cross mocks in his standup act.

"There was no description in the script on how to play him," Cross says. "So I thought of him as kind of an older hippie, New Age, psychoanalyst but also like a Dick Cavett, kind of an Upper East Side, turtle-neck-wearing type."

"I'm nothing like him. I am as far away from that character as you can imagine."

At 17, Cross left his native Atlanta for Boston, where he attended college and got into standup. After moving to Los Angeles, he met Bob Odenkirk while working as a writer for "The Ben Stiller Show." The two collaborated to create the acclaimed sketch comedy series "Mr. Show" for HBO in 1995.

Cross moved back to New York three years ago, but "Arrested" has him doing the bicoastal thing.

He has parlayed his standup popularity into CDs. A DVD titled "Let America Laugh" chronicles his life on the road during a recent tour.

He has done mainstream work, too. He had a role in "Men in Black" and a memorable part as a man pretending to be mentally handicapped and spouting phrases such as "chicken pot pie" on the NBC comedy "Just Shoot Me."



Portia de Rossi, as Lindsay, left, goes on a shopping spree when she lands a role in a commercial that her husband, Tobias (David Cross), auditioned for in an episode of "Arrested Development." Cross said he is nothing like his "Arrested" character, the hapless Tobias Fünke, but he found he could do a lot with the role.

Photos courtesy of Fox



All in the family: The "Arrested Development" cast includes, from left, Tony Hale, David Cross, Will Arnett, Portia de Rossi, Michael Cera, Alla Shawkat, Jason Bateman, Jessica Walter and Jeffrey Tambor.

Beckham voices fund-raising plea

England captain and Real Madrid star David Beckham has filmed a 30-second public service announcement for UNICEF to help raise funds for tsunami victims.

Beckham, who was appointed Wednesday as a UNICEF goodwill ambassador, filmed the message in Copenhagen, Denmark, during a visit to UNICEF's supply division, which is key to the organization's emergency response division.

UNICEF said Beckham's message would be a valuable fund-raising tool as the organization seeks to raise \$143 million to help the 15 million children affected by the disaster in southern Asia and parts of Africa.

"The global TV appeal he has recorded will be enormously useful," said executive director Carol Bellamy.



Beckham

Martin visits nation wrecked by tsunami

Pop singer Ricky Martin says he knew he had to come to Thailand to help after watching the devastating scenes of the Asian tsunami.

"After looking at those images on television, it was impossible for me to stay at home with my arms crossed," said Martin, who arrived Wednesday in Bangkok.

The 33-year-old Puerto Rico native talked about the Ricky Martin Foundation's anti-trafficking People for Children project, and the momentum he hopes to bring to the relief efforts in Thailand.

"Music has given me the opportunity to reach masses of people," said Martin, whose hits include "She Bangs," "Shake Your Bon-Bon" and "Livin' La Vida Loca."

He said he felt a need to give back, particularly to children, and to add to the efforts of the Thai government and international organizations.

Martin said he wants to figure out what his foundation can do to help, whether it is building orphanages and schools or producing charity events.



Martin

Who's the greatest American ever?

Discovery Channel and America Online are joining in a national contest to name the "Greatest American" ever.

Starting Thursday, online voters can throw their support behind the person they believe "most influenced the way they think, work and live," according to a statement from Discovery Channel and AOL.

The top nominees will be listed in March, with Discovery planning a seven-hour, four-night series in the spring about the leading vote-getters and the winner.

Cross "brings a whole new style, a whole new tempo" to the show, says Bateman. "Everybody's method is different, but he is from a whole different world again. His friendship is even more important to me."

"He is an incredibly intelligent, thoughtful, gentle guy. He is one of the most quality people in my life right now."

The first episode will air in May and will profile a selection from the top 100 nominees. The list will be pared down by further online voting, with the No. 1 choice profiled on the final episode in June.

From March through May, Discovery Channel will provide AOL with biographies of leading candidates in news, sports, entertainment and other categories.

Bush twins' inaugural fashions set

It's their dad's day, but look for President Bush's twin daughters to make a statement of their own at next week's inaugural balls in sexy, stylish Badgley Mischka gowns.

Jenna Bush plans to wear an emerald silk crepe column gown with metallic green banding and jeweled insets at the hip. "It looks gorgeous on her," said Mark Badgley, who, with partner, James Mischka, designed the dress.

Barbara's dress is a little more dramatic and romantic. Badgley described it as a pale aquamarine silk chiffon gown with a plunging neckline, a ruffle seam skirt and jeweled straps.

"I get the feeling they are interested in fashion. They are always dressed beautifully," Badgley said, noting that they are among the few 23-year-olds who need several gowns in their closets.

"We were honored enough to get a phone call from the White House," he said. "It was like, 'Oh my God, it's the White House on the phone!'"

Stories and photos from wire services

Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



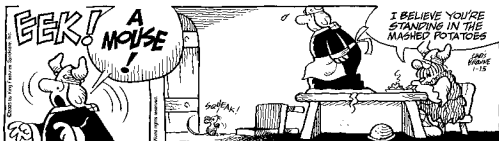
Blondie



Dilbert



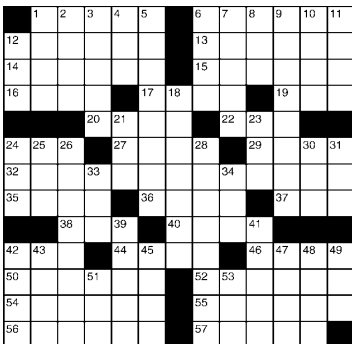
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 The 2004 World Series, e.g.
- 6 Pure
- 12 The town cutup?
- 13 Jennifer, on "Friends"
- 14 Suitable for farming
- 15 Honor
- 16 Pickable
- 17 Help surreptitiously
- 19 Buxom model's monogram
- 20 Carthaginian queen
- 22 Still
- 24 Boom times
- 27 Ship-related (Abbr.)
- 29 Obsessed seaman
- 32 Advances
- 35 Quarry
- 36 Small combo
- 37 24 hours
- 38 "Amazing Race" episode
- 40 Carolina college
- 42 Nectar collector
- 44 "A Little Bitty Tear" singer
- 46 Unsure one's reply
- 50 Do re mi, etc.
- 52 Lake near Syracuse
- 54 Pushes rudely
- 55 Long-vowel indicator
- 56 Voiced, in linguistics
- 57 Partners' gear

Down

- 1 Culinary clothing
- 2 Call it a day on the set
- 3 Underwent recession
- 4 Elusive one
- 5 Adjust to biological change
- 6 Great Lakes indigene
- 7 Precipitous
- 8 Don't just sit there
- 9 Put in a scabbard
- 10 Adolescent
- 11 "Desire Under the"
- 12 Baseball
- 18 Running ballet step
- 21 Officeholders
- 23 Attention
- 24 Fenway arbiter
- 25 Standard
- 26 Closeted secret
- 28 Laborious
- 30 "— was saying, ..."
- 31 Badge earners' org.
- 33 Give the once-over
- 34 Sticky stuff
- 39 Basic assumption
- 41 Family member
- 42 Springsteen nickname
- 43 Toyota subcompact
- 45 Three-piece piece
- 47 Swamp
- 48 Tumults
- 49 TV chef Martin
- 51 Ms. Gardner
- 53 Forty weeks

Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-15

CRYPTOQUIP

GTWY NZLWZYW J WVZLWN
EIPP EISKYF DTW GKYDWS,
K FIWNN TW VZIPE JW

X W X I Y W K Y X R Y I R S A
Yesterday's Cryptquip: SHE STARTED TO TELL HER FRIEND A TALE ABOUT A NOOSE, BUT THEN LEFT HER HANGING.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: X equals J

Wie trails by 9 after first round of Sony

BY DOUG FERGUSON
The Associated Press

HONOLULU — First came a stinger tee shot with her driver — a low, penetrating flight into 25 mph gusts that went 275 yards.

For her next trick, Michelle Wie hit a knockdown 6-iron that stopped 6 feet away for a birdie.

It was extraordinary stuff for anyone on the PGA Tour, let alone a 15-year-old girl.

"I didn't feel like I was playing with a 15-year-old girl," said Matt Davidson, who shot 77 in his PGA Tour debut while playing before a large gallery hanging on every shot Wie hit.

"She has all the tools to be out there," he said.

But by the end of the first round Thursday, Wie was happy just to save par. Stacked up against the men in the Sony Open, her 5-over 75 was less than ordinary.

Wie battled blustery conditions that led to the second-highest scoring at Waialae Country Club since it changed to a par 70 six years ago. She had a tougher time deciding how to gauge her performance.

She tied nine other men (Fred Funk, Paul Casey) and beat 15 others in the 144-player field. But she also was nine shots behind the leaders — Stewart Cink, Brett Quigley, Tom Byrum and Hank Kuehne — who each shot 66.

And she faced a tough task Friday trying to become the first female to make the cut on the PGA Tour since Babe Zaharias in the 1945 Tuga Open.

"It could have gone both ways," Wie said. "If my putting just went in, I think I would have shot an awesome round. But it

could have gone a lot worse. I could have easily made five or six more bogeys. But I hung in there."

Her only consolation? "At least I'm not in last place," she said.

Wie last year opened with a 72 and followed that with a 68 — the lowest score for a female competing on a men's tour — to miss the cut by one shot.

Her 75 on Thursday put her in a tie for 120th (she was tied for 105th last year), and she had four shots below the projected cut line. Wie stayed on the practice range for nearly three hours after the round, knowing it might take her best to stick around on the weekend.

"If I end up at a 1 over par, maybe I'll make it," she said.

Wie had said she would need some luck on her side, and she didn't have much. Not only did several putts burn the edge of the cup, her morning start turned out to be the best end of the draw.

The wind subsided slightly in the afternoon, and the scoring stabilized. Still, the average score of 71.813 was more than 1½ strokes higher than last year.

She wasn't the only one who struggled in the wind.

Only 29 players broke par, the fewest in seven years at Waialae.

Among them was Vijay Singh, the No. 1 player in the world who had only three sub-par holes — one of them an eagle — and dropped back to 69 with a sloppy bogey on the par-5 18th.

"It was hard hitting every shot — the drive, approach shot was difficult," Singh said. "It's tough for the boys over here, you know? Going to be tough for a girl here, too."

Two-time defending champion Ernie Els



Michelle Wie tees off the 15th tee during the first round of the Sony Open on Thursday at the Waialae Country Club. Wie shot a 5-over 75 and was nine shots behind the leaders.

had to birdie his last hole for a 71, the first time he has shot over in 17 rounds at Waialae. U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen hit his first two tee shots out-of-bounds and made a 9, but recovered for a 72.

Byrum was even par through 10 holes and finished with two birdies. He was among the 47 players who finished behind Wie a year ago and asked what she shot Thursday.

"She's going to be a great player," he said. "I might want to hear her now while I can."

Paul Azinger, Chad Campbell and Ryder Cup captain Tom Lehman were among those at 67 on a day in which only 29 players in the field of 144 broke par.

Azinger played with Daniel Chopra, who was 5 over with two holes to play and birdied them both. The threesome joked about how Chopra rallied hard to avoid losing to a 15-year-old, although Azinger put it in perspective.

"There's no shame in losing to that girl,"

he said. "She's incredible. She hits it like a man."

Wie's only birdie came on her third hole, the par-4 12th, which she played to perfection. She was even par for the round until a few errant drives cost her. A tee shot on the 16th found the left rough, and Wie had to lay up short of the green, eventually missing a 20-foot par putt.

Her only big gaffe came on the 17th, a 187-yard hole framed by the Pacific Ocean on the left and deep bunkers on the right. Her 4-iron into the stiff wind — the same club Els used earlier — went right, and she three-putted from 20 feet for a double bogey.

Wie missed a 5-footer for birdie on No. 18, dropped another shot on No. 1, three-putted from long range on the second hole, and it looked as if her round was getting away from her.

She turned it around by saving par from a bunker on No. 3, the first of four quality par saves the rest of the day.

"If I didn't make a par there, who knows what the score would be?" she said.

Federer, Davenport draw top seeds for Australian

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Defending champion Roger Federer and four-time winner Andre Agassi could meet in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open after both landed in the top quarter of Friday's draw for the season's first Grand Slam event.

Top-ranked Federer won the Australian Open, Wimbledon and U.S. Open last season, the first man since Mats Wilander in 1988 to win three of the season's four majors.

The 23-year-old Swiss star will open against Fabrice Santoro of France and could meet Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan in the third round. Agassi in the quarterfinals and 2004 runner-up Marat Safin, seeded fourth, in the semifinals.

In the women's draw, top-ranked Lindsay Davenport, who opens against Elena Dementieva, could meet eighth-seeded Venus Williams in the quarterfinals and French Open champion Anastasia Myskina, ranked third, in the semifinals.

Agassi, the Australian Open champion in 1995, 2000, '01 and '03, is seeded ninth. But, his status for the championship was in

Sports briefs

doubt after he retired in the first set of a tennet match against Andy Roddick on Thursday because of an injured right hip.

Agassi was scheduled to have tests on his hip Friday. After a private practice session late in the afternoon at Rod Laver Arena, Agassi asked organizers of the Kooyong exhibition tournament if he could play a match Saturday.

He will play Tim Henman in an exhibition following the final between Federer and Roddick.

The 34-year-old Agassi, whose 26-match winning streak at Melbourne Park ended in a semifinal loss to Safin last year, faces a qualifier in the first round and 2003 runner-up Rainer Schuettler in the second. Fellow American Taylor Dent looms as a third-round opponent.

Venus Williams, whose best performance at the Australian Open was a loss in the final to younger sister Serena two years ago, opens against Elena Dementieva of Greece, who reached a career-high ranking of 14th about 18 months ago.

Serena Williams, who won her fourth consecutive major at the '03 Australian Open, was drawn in the bottom quarter with second-ranked Amelie Mauresmo. Serena will open against Camille Pin in the first round. Pin finished last season ranked 98th.

The Open women's draw has been badly hit by injury. Last year's winner, Justine Henin-Hardenne pulled out last week with a knee injury. Kim Clijsters, who lost to Henin-Hardenne in the final, also is out with a persistent wrist injury. Jennifer Capriati, a two-time winner, said Wednesday she had withdrawn because of a recurring right shoulder injury.

Leinart delays NFL decision

LOS ANGELES — Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart has delayed announcing whether he will return to Southern California for his senior season or turn pro, saying he will reveal his plans Friday.

"I need an extra day to continue gathering information," the USC quarterback said Thursday, the day he originally set as his decision day for the decision.

The NFL deadline for underclassmen to declare for the draft is Saturday.

Two other USC juniors, line-backer Lofa Tatupu and punter Tom Malone, also are expected to say Friday whether they will enter the draft.

Leinart, 21, has consulted with coaches, friends, teammates, NFL quarterbacks Carson Palmer and Ben Roethlisberger and — most importantly, Leinart said — his own parents.

U.S. men's soccer team might use replacements

NEW YORK — The U.S. Soccer Federation said Thursday it will start to recruit a replacement team for next month's World Cup qualifier if a players union dispute is not quickly resolved.

The USSF took the stance after the union rejected an offer to go to mediation in exchange for a players' pledge not to strike through World Cup qualifying, which ends in October or November.

The federation said it will use players who have never appeared at a U.S. national team camp for the Feb. 9 game at Trinidad and Tobago unless the regulars, who are unionized, agree to a deal by Feb. 1. The USSF intends to hold a training camp for the replacements in Carson, Calif.

"The players' association has left us no choice," USSF spokesman Jim Moorhouse said.

Union head Mark Levinstein said the union would agree to a no-strike pledge only if management in turn agreed to start paying players under the terms of the USSF's latest offer instead of the agreement that covered 1999-02. The old agreement expired at the end of 2002 and the players are seeking a pay increase.

Kwan, Goebel win short programs at nationals

PORTLAND, Ore. — After all these years, there's still no one who does it better than Michelle Kwan.

Kwan earned three perfect 6.0s for presentation Thursday night, giving a moving performance that won her the short program at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships and took her a step closer to history. If she wins the free skate Saturday night, she'll win her ninth U.S. title and tie the record set by Maribel Vinson Owen in the 1920s and 1930s.

Olympic bronze medalist Tim Goebel won the men's short program.

The free skates, worth 67 percent of the final score, are Saturday night.

LB looks to weed out steroid abusers

Selig says plan is step toward zero tolerance

BY RONALD BLUM

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Now comes the real test for baseball: Will any player get suspended this year for using steroids? With some of its biggest stars under suspicion and lawmakers demanding action, Major League Baseball adopted a tougher steroid-testing program that will suspend first-time offenders for 10 days and randomly test players year-round.

The agreement was hailed by baseball management and its union Thursday as a huge step forward. But it was criticized by some as not going far enough because the penalties are less harsh than those in Olympic sports and amphetamines were not banned.

"I've been saying for some time that the goal for this industry is zero tolerance regarding steroids," Commissioner Bud Selig said.

A first positive test would result in a penalty of 10 days, a second positive test in a 30-day ban, a third positive in a 60-day penalty, and a fourth positive test in a one-year ban — all without pay. A player who tests positive a fifth time would be subject to discipline determined by the commissioner.

"It's more for our protection than anything else," Boston pitcher Tim Lincecum said.

Under the previous agreement, a first positive test resulted only in treatment, and a second posi-

tive test was subject to a 15-day suspension. Only with a fifth positive test would a player subject to a one-year ban.

"It appears to be a significant breakthrough," Sen. John McCain said in Washington.

No player was suspended for steroid use in 2004, the first season of testing with penalties.

"We're acting today to help restore the confidence of our fans," Selig said.

Since the old agreement was reached in 2002, baseball has come under increased scrutiny about steroids.

Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield testified before a federal grand jury investigating the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative known as BALCO. President Bush mentioned the steroid problem in last year's State of the Union address from Los Angeles.

The old deal wasn't due to expire until December 2006, but the union took the rare step of renegotiating a major section of its labor contract. The new rules run until December 2008.

"I think it's pretty historic that we went into a bargaining agreement and changed something," Minnesota pitcher Kyle Lohse said. "Hopefully, that shows everybody how serious we are about getting steroids out of the game."

McCain, who had threatened baseball with legislation, said that is no longer necessary, though he would have preferred a 10- to 15-game suspension for a first offense and a permanent ban for multiple positive tests.

"I would have liked to see amphetamines added to this list," McCain said.

World Anti-Doping Agency chairman Dick Pound, a member of the International Olympic Committee since 1978, said the new rules didn't go far enough.

"Basically, instead of having to hold up the liquor store five times before you get a one-year suspension, you only have to hold it up four times," he said. "But at least there's some penalty incurred the first time that you're tested, and that's a step forward."

In addition to one mandatory test each season, players will be randomly selected for additional tests, with no limit on the number, and for the first time will be subject to random tests during the offseason. In addition, diuretics and many steroid precursors were added to the banned list.

WADA's Dr. Gary Wadler criticized the failure to address amphetamines, which many in baseball consider to be a far greater problem than steroids.

"Amphetamines, better known as 'greenies,' have a long tradition in baseball," Wadler said. "For them not to be in it raises questions."

The issue of amphetamines came up during the talks between

Baseball pumps up the penalties

Major League Baseball announced a stricter steroid-testing program Thursday to deal with the health and integrity issues. The agreement runs until December 2008.

Penalties for positive tests for steroid use in various sports

	MLB OFFENSE	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH
Old	Counseling	15 days	25 days	50 days	1 year
New	10 days	30 days	60 days	1 year	League decision
Other sports					
MLB	15 games	30 games	60 games	1 year	Lifetime
NFL	4 games	6 games	1 year	1 year	1 year
NBA	5 games	10 games	25 games	25 games	25 games
Other	2 years	Lifetime			

AP

owners and players, said Bob Manfred, management's chief labor negotiator.

"Stimulants are a complicated area," Manfred said. "Are they performance enhancing? How should they be regulated? That's something that we've put to the health policy advisory committee to look at because we weren't prepared to deal with it."

Human growth hormone was added to a longer list of banned substances, but it will be found only when science determines a way to detect it in urine samples. Currently, it can be found only in blood tests, which will not be conducted in baseball.

"We had a problem and we dealt with the problem," Selig said.

"I regarded this as not only a health issue, but certainly you could say it was an integrity issue in this sport."

The agreement was approved by owners Thursday but still must be voted on by players.

First-time offenders are suspended for at least four games in the NFL, and for five games in the NBA. WADA's code, which has been adopted by most Olympic sports, says the "norm" is two-year bans for a first positive test and a lifetime ban for a second, unless there are mitigating circumstances.

Associated Press Writers Bob Bauman in Philadelphia, Greg Campbell in Minneapolis, Frederic J. Frommer in Washington, Jimmy Gole in Boston and Steve Wilstein in Seattle contributed to this report.

New drug policy is Bonds' greatest gift to baseball

BY SHAUN POWELL

Newsday

When he retires and gives us a moment to reflect, we will applaud Barry Bonds for his all-time home run record, his sterling MVP collection and his staggering performance in the stretch run of his career, but mostly for his greatest contribution to baseball: the new, pumped-up steroid policy.

Because we know that without Barry, there's no way baseball owners and the players' union, who exist to disagree, would've locked themselves in a room and done something yesterday that was long overdue.

There's no way these people, who look the other way more often than a school crossing guard, would have made an effort to clean up the game. There's no way the rulers of baseball would have delivered a deterrent to drug use without the unintentional cooperation of Barry.

With a big assist from Jason Giambi.

So when you see these former artificially enhanced ballplayers this spring, don't bow. Welcome them with open minds and arms. Without their participation in the BALCO scandal and the universal scream that followed, baseball still would be strung out on dope and suffering from a major integrity problem.



Something or someone had to persuade baseball and the union to get moving on a drug policy with teeth, because baseball was under no financial pressure to clean up its act.

In recent years, the fans were so suckered by the home run that they ignored the hints. They kept rushing to the ballpark in record numbers and made it easy for baseball to sweep aside the drug issue.

There was no incentive for baseball to twist the union's arm and get a drug policy with teeth because the game was prospering, mostly because of the steroid-fueled home runs.

Then the BALCO scandal broke, and it involved one of the game's greatest players, and suddenly baseball had a good reason to act swiftly.

What gave them that urgency? History did.

Baseball cherishes history, and history was prepared to portray the home-run era in a very unflattering light. The dreaded "asterisk" was circling above, like a hungry vulture, ready to swoop and snap away at all the current-day power records, especially those belonging to Bonds.

This potential embarrassment was something the commissioner, the owners and the union didn't want to be linked with for-

ever. They didn't want to have Bonds bearing down on Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron under the dark cloud of drugs and have history wonder whether something was up.

They wanted no more repeats of what happened last fall, when Bonds won the Hank Aaron Award as the NL's most outstanding offensive performer, appeared at a news conference, made a brief statement and then got hustled out of the building before someone could ask the inevitable questions.

That's why you had Commissioner Bud Selig and union chief Donald Fehr together Thursday in a kumbaya show of support regarding the state of baseball and the steps taken to make it believable again.

"My goal for this industry is zero tolerance for steroid use," Selig said.

"I will be surprised if, over time, this doesn't take care of the problem virtually completely," Fehr said.

The new policy isn't as tough as the one adopted by the Olympics.

But for baseball, it represents a major concession and a positive step in an era in which steroids are responsible for creating bogus numbers and fake athletic feats.

Distancing itself from steroids is important for baseball, which places a premium on statistical numbers and tradition and history.

Baseball just gave us a reason to trust it

again. This wasn't the case when the ball first began soaring from ballparks in record numbers and players began to look like cover boys for muscle and fitness magazines.

Even worse, the steroid issue, fair or not, was raised whenever someone's home run numbers suddenly jumped. Everyone was guilty before being proven innocent, and until now, there wasn't a method in place to prove innocence.

The real victims were the players who used hard work, instead of hard drugs, to make themselves better. Until baseball put a solid policy in action, drug suspicion was everywhere unwanted company.

The geniuses who run the union had to get serious about steroids before any progress could be made. Instead of hiding behind the issue of privacy rights, which discouraged a true testing procedure, the union had to place the integrity of the game at the forefront.

That's what happened in the last few months, helped largely by Bonds' role in BALCO, and now baseball has suspensions for first-time offenders and year-round testing.

You might notice a difference in the game this season. The home runs could decrease, but the credibility of baseball can only increase. For this, we must give credit where it's due and give props to the man who made it possible.

Thank you Barry, Barry much.



After compiling a 243-130 record at Idaho, University of New Orleans and Iowa State, Tim Floyd was a combined 90-231 as the coach of the Chicago Bulls and New Orleans Hornets.

Floyd to return to college game at SC

Trojans turn to former Iowa St. coach coming off disastrous run in NBA

BY KEN PETERS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A flop as an NBA coach, Tim Floyd is returning to the college game.

Floyd was scheduled to be introduced Friday as Southern California's new coach, taking the job Rick Majerus accepted last month before quitting less than a week later.

A former Chicago Bulls and New Orleans Hornets coach, Floyd earlier was 35-25 in two seasons at Idaho; 127-58 in six seasons at the University of New Orleans; and 81-47 in four years at Iowa State.

Floyd was a combined 90-231 with the Bulls and Hornets, and

was fired by New Orleans last May after the team went 41-41 and lost in the first round of the playoffs.

Floyd, 50, still had two years remaining on his contract with the Hornets, an issue that had to be worked out before he took the Trojans' post.

He had the unenviable task of replacing Phil Jackson as the Bulls' coach in the post-Michael Jordan era. Jackson won six NBA titles and 74 percent of his games in nine seasons.

Floyd went 49-190 in Chicago — one of the worst records ever for an NBA coach — before resigning in December 2001.

"Every day has been hell," he said at the time.

Besides Jordan, Floyd also didn't have Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman, and he clashed with Charles Oakley and Ron Artest, too.

USC fired Henry Bibby on Dec. 6, just four games into the season. Assistant Jim Saia was promoted to interim head coach for the remainder of the season.

Majerus resigned five days after being hired, claiming his health and fitness weren't up to the demands of the job. He initially planned to do recruiting for USC for the rest of this season, then take over full coaching duties in April.

The Trojans, 2-2 when Bibby was fired, are 5-7 under Saia.

Saia said he heard of the hiring from the school's sports information director before the game.

"He is a great hire," Saia said. "Whatever I can do to help him build the program, I will do."

During his four years at Iowa State, Floyd guided the team to three consecutive 20-win seasons, the first coach in the school's history to do so. The Cyclones went 22-9 in 1996-97 and made it to the round of 16 in the NCAA tournament.

He seemed excited to be moving to Southern California, a hotbed for high school basketball.

"I think this will be the most talent-rich recruiting area I've ever been in," he said in an interview with *SL.com*. "I think there's a base of kids that grew up wanting to attend USC, and that's always a good situation for a coach to be in."

Williams, depleted Duke surge past N.C. State

The Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Shelden Williams and the short-handed Duke Blue Devils came up big in the second half against struggling North Carolina State.

Dominating inside, the 6-foot-9, 250-pound Williams scored 18 of his 22 points in the final 20 minutes in No. 5 Duke's 86-74 victory Thursday night.

"None of us really worry about depth," said J.J. Redick, who had eight points and seven rebounds for the Blue Devils (12-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference).

"Certainly we're a little short-handed right now," he said.

"But we've got a lot of tough guys on this team, a lot of guys who make tough plays and want to take tough shots."

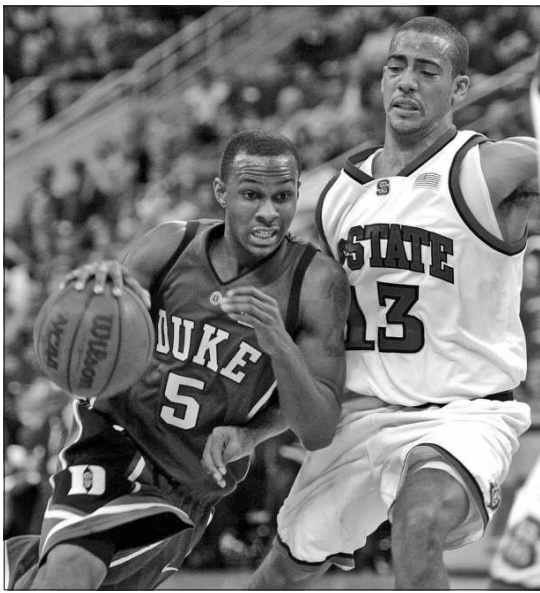
Daniel Ewing added 17 points for Duke, which scored on nine straight possessions midway through the second half to take the lead.

Playing without Shavlik Randolph (mononucleosis) and Reggie Love (broken foot), Duke got strong performances from Lee Melchioni and freshman DeMarcus Nelson. Melchioni had a career-high 16 points, and the 6-3 Nelson scored 15 points despite being matched up against bigger players.

"I really love my team," coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "They're not (Christian) Laettner or (Elton) Brand, but they make plays. I enjoy watching the evolution of this team and I'm just so proud of what they're accomplishing."

Duke appeared to be on its way to a third straight road loss to the Wolfpack (10-5, 0-2), but Williams took charge when the Blue Devils needed him most. After taking only two shots in the first half, he went 7-for-10 from the floor in the second.

"It was one of those things where (teammates) kept going to



Duke's Daniel Ewing drives past North Carolina State's Cameron Bennerman on Thursday at the RBC Center in Raleigh, N.C. Ewing scored 17 points as the No. 5 Blue Devils defeated the Wolfpack 86-74.

me until they found an answer for me," Williams said. "And fortunately, they didn't."

Williams tied it at 48 with an inside basket over Iliyan Evtimov, and added a field goal off a feed

from Ewing to make it 50-49 with 13:28 to play. The Blue Devils went on to score on their next seven possessions, getting two more baskets from Williams.

The Wolfpack got no closer

than four points the rest of the way.

Cameron Bennerman led the Wolfpack with 20 points, and Julius Hodge, the reigning ACC player of the year, added 13 on

3-for-10 shooting.

N.C. State, ranked No. 12 last month, has lost four straight for the first time since the 1999-00 season.

"I think our team is going through a tough stretch and I think we're all frustrated," Wolfpack coach Herb Sendek said. "We understand the answer is not to panic or flinch. We've got to come closer together and work harder."

No. 14 Washington 77, Oregon 56: At Seattle, Tre Simmons and Bobby Jones each scored 15 points, and Nate Robinson and Jamaal Williams added 14 apiece for the Huskies.

Simmons also had a career-high 12 rebounds to help Washington (14-2, 4-1 Pac-10) win its 16th straight home game. Bryce Taylor had 16 points for Oregon (10-3, 2-2).

No. 16 Gonzaga 76, Loyola Marymount 65: At Spokane, Wash., J.P. Batista scored 17 points in his first start, and Ronny Turiaf added 16 on his 22nd birthday to lead the Bulldogs.

Gonzaga (12-3, 2-1 West Coast Conference) was coming off a loss to Saint Mary's on Saturday that ended its conference winning streak at 17. Matthew Knight had 20 points for Loyola Marymount (9-7, 1-2).

No. 17 Arizona 77, Southern California 68: At Tucson, Ariz., Chris Rodgers scored a career-high 22 points, seven during the Wildcats' decisive second-half surge.

Selim Stoudamire added 21 points on 5-for-9 shooting from three-point range for the Wildcats (13-3, 3-1 Pac-10). Nick Young led USC (0-5, 7-9) with 18 points.

Memphis 78, No. 22 Marquette 68: At Memphis, Tenn., Rodney Carney scored 29 points, and freshman guard Darius Washington had 20 points and five assists for Memphis (9-7, 2-0 Conference USA).

Dameon Mason led Marquette (13-2, 1-1) with 20 points.

Lakers hold on after losing Kobe

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The instant Kobe Bryant crashed to the floor, he knew he was in trouble.

Bryant severely sprained his right ankle and had to be helped off the court early in the Los Angeles Lakers' 98-94 victory over LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday night.

"I'm guessing it might be weeks — it just doesn't feel like a day-to-day thing," Bryant said when asked how long he thinks he'll be sidelined.

"It hurts, it hurts a lot. It's the worst one I've had," he said. "I am in a lot of pain right now. I am just trying to stay off of it right now."

Bryant, the NBA's second-leading scorer with a 28.2-point average, was injured when he landed on his right knee's right foot while going for a rebound under the Cavaliers' basket with 5:39 left in the first quarter. Newble was called for a foul on the play.

"Crunching and instant throbbing" is how Bryant described his immediate feeling.

"He went up for the rebound and I kind of nudged him a little bit by mistake and basically fell into him as my momentum was

going that way," Newble said. "I was trying to catch myself and he came down on my ankle funny. It's just an accident."

X-rays were negative, but Bryant was scheduled to have an MRI on Friday. He was on crutches after the game with his ankle wrapped.

"The worst it can get is that I have a couple tears in there and that is not season-ending by any means," he said. "It is just rest and recuperation and I am happy about that. I am happy it's just an MRI and there is no fracture or anything like that. I just need to rest. Guys will hold down the fort no doubt and I will come back ready to play."

Bryant grabbed his ankle in obvious pain upon hitting the floor. Teammate Brian Grant and trainer Gary Vitti helped him off the court and into the Staples Center tunnel, where Grant and injured Kidd's latest statement would have George carried him into the locker room.

Bryant had two points and three assists before leaving with the game tied at 21.

Lamar Odom had 24 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, and Caron Butler added 21 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, who won for the third time in four games.

James led Cleveland with 28



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant twists in pain after injuring his right ankle during the first half against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday.

points, a season-high 13 rebounds and nine assists to just miss his first career triple-double. Jeff McInnis added 20 points and Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 13 points and 15 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who had their four-game winning streak snapped.

James visited the Lakers' locker room at halftime to check on Bryant.

"I just went in there to see how he was doing," James said. "He told me that he was likely going to be out for a little bit, but I hope he gets well soon. (He's) like an idol to me."

Rockets 94, Nets 85 (OT): Bobby Sura scored a career-high 35 points for the Rockets, making 11 of 16 shots, including 6-for-7 from three-point range.

Juan Howard scored eight of his 12 points in overtime, and a hobbled Tracy McGrady added 18 points for the Rockets, who won their third straight.

Jason Kidd narrowly missed a triple-double with 16 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, and Vince Carter had 17 points for the visiting Nets, who dropped their third in a row.

Kings 107, Jazz 93: Chris Stojakovic scored 27 points, Chris Webber had 23 points and 15 rebounds, and Brad Miller added 21 points on 9-for-10 shooting for the host Kings, who had just nine players in uniform for the second straight game.

Mike Bibby sat out with a sprained ankle, and the Kings lost Greg Oestergard and Maurice Evans to injuries during a physical game featuring plenty of hard contact and confrontations.

Carlos Boozer had 15 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the Jazz, who followed up surprising victories over Phoenix and San Antonio with their 10th loss in 12 games.

guard in the West, trailed by the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant (1,362,409).

In the East, Detroit's Ben Wallace trails O'Neal at center with 560,484 votes. New Jersey's Vince Carter (1,294,646) and Orlando's Grant Hill (1,118,795) lead the forwards, while Philadelphia's Allen Iverson (1,154,074) moved ahead of Cleveland's LeBron James (1,151,688) as top guard.

Bucks' Ford out for season
MILWAUKEE — Milwaukee Bucks guard T.J. Ford was ruled out for the rest of the season Thursday because he's recovering from spinal surgery.

Ford's spinal cord bruise continues to improve but has not healed enough for him to start any type of basketball activity, the team said after consulting with doctors. He has missed the entire season for the Bucks (12-12).

Ford, the eighth overall pick in the 2003 NBA draft, had surgery May 5. He was injured when he was knocked down going to the basket in a February 2004 game against Minnesota and was carried off the court on a stretcher.

He was leading all rookies in assists and ranked ninth overall in that category last season before he was hurt. He averaged 7.1 points, 6.5 assists and 3.2 rebounds.

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
New York	17	18	.486
Boston	19	16	.541
Philadelphia	14	22	.389
Toronto	12	24	.333
New Jersey	12	24	.333

Southeast Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Atlanta	20	13	.606
Washington	19	14	.576
Charlotte	8	23	.258
Orlando	16	17	.486

Central Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Cleveland	17	18	.486
Detroit	17	18	.486
Chicago	15	18	.455
Memphis	14	19	.421

Western Conference

Southwest Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
San Antonio	19	17	.529
Dallas	17	17	.500
Houston	16	18	.471
Memphis	18	15	.545
New Orleans	17	16	.512

Northwest Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Seattle	15	23	.395
Minnesota	17	20	.455
Portland	19	18	.512
Denver	15	20	.429

Pacific Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Phoenix	15	5	.861
Sacramento	21	13	.616
Golden State	19	15	.559
L.A. Clippers	11	23	.324
Lakers	11	23	.324

Thursday's games			
Team	W	L	Pct
Houston 94, New Jersey 93	17	16	.512
Sacramento 107, Utah 95	21	13	.616
L.A. Lakers 88, Cleveland 94	11	23	.324

Friday's games			
Team	W	L	Pct
Phoenix at Atlanta	19	14	.576
Memphis at Charlotte	16	17	.486
Orlando at Houston	16	17	.486
Dallas at San Antonio	17	17	.500
Portland at New Orleans	16	17	.486
Atlanta at Detroit	19	14	.576
Miami at L.A. Clippers	11	23	.324
Golden State at Seattle	15	23	.395

Saturday's games			
Team	W	L	Pct
New York at Chicago	17	18	.486
Phoenix at Western	19	14	.576
Charlotte at Atlanta	16	17	.486
Portland at Memphis	16	17	.486
Portland at Minnesota	16	17	.486
New York at Dallas	17	17	.500
Cleveland at Houston	16	17	.486
L.A. Clippers at Sacramento	11	23	.324

Sunday's games			
Team	W	L	Pct
New Orleans at Toronto	16	17	.486
Cleveland at Seattle	15	23	.395

Thursday

Rockets 94, Nets 85 (OT)

NEW JERSEY — Buford 4-9 4-4 14, Collins 2-6 4-4 8, Krstic 7-14 1-2 15, Kidd 7-20 0-1 16, Carter 6-19 5-6 17, Best 1-4 0-1 3, Vaughn 0-0 0-0 0.

Moss shows no remorse after being fined \$11,000

By MARC NARDUCCI

The Philadelphia Inquirer

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Minnesota Vikings wide receiver Randy Moss was fined \$11,000 by the NFL for unsportsmanlike conduct on Thursday for pretending to moon Green Bay Packers fans this week during Minnesota's NFC wild-card victory. Moss will be an NFL divisional playoff game against the Eagles.

Moss' one-sentence response to the league-imposed penalty may land him in even more hot water.

"It's only 10 grand — what's 10 grand to me?" said Moss, who signed an eight-year, \$75 million contract in 2001. Moss added that next time, he might do something more vulgar with regards to his anatomy.

Moss, 27, commented after walking through a group of reporters standing in zero-degree temperatures outside the team's practice facility. The all-pro receiver initially said nothing while walking toward his car but spoke after continual prodding.

The fine was issued by the NFL's director of game operations, Peter Hadzary.

Vikings officials were unavailable for comment, either on the fine or Moss' reaction to it. Vikings head coach Mike Tice declined comment during his radio call-in show on Thursday night. Joe Browne, the NFL's executive vice president-communications, and Greg Aiello, vice president-public relations, were also unavailable for comment. Eagles

spokesman Derek Boyko said the team declined comment.

Moss' agent, Dante DiTrapano, told the Associated Press he planned to appeal the fine. "If you can't have freedom of expression on the football field, come on," DiTrapano said.

Moss' end-zone celebration, which came in Minnesota's 31-17 victory over the Packers in Green Bay, has created a national furor all week.

The flamboyant receiver, who had two touchdown catches in the game, drew the ire of a Fox Broadcasting crew televising the game.

“It's only 10 grand — what's 10 grand to me?”

Randy Moss

Vikings wide receiver

Green Bay fans, and football fans around the country when he pretended to moon the crowd after his second TD.

Moss, his back toward the crowd, bent over and pretended to put his pants down. He also briefly bumped the goalpost with his backside before being joined in celebration by laughing teammates.

Whether Moss encounters further fines for his one-sentence remark Thursday remains to be seen.

"Your actions were based on poor judgment, did not reflect well on you or the Vikings and were insulting to many," Hadzary wrote in a letter to Moss.

Thompson hired as Packers GM

The Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Ted Thompson was hired Friday to take over coach Mike Sherman's general manager duties with the Green Bay Packers.

Thompson leaves his job as Seattle's vice president of football operations.

Packers President Bob Harlan said in a statement that Thompson's hiring "will reduce Mike's workload and enable him to devote more time to coaching."

"In today's salary cap world of professional football where rosters are overhauled every offseason, both the job of a general manager and the job of a head coach are extremely demanding and require an inordinate amount of time and effort," Harlan said.

It's not clear, however, if the team will pursue a contract extension with Sherman, who has a year left on his deal, which was to pay him about \$3 million for his dual roles. His new titles are head coach and executive vice president.

The Packers scheduled a news conference for Friday. Sherman took on the general

NFL Briefs

manager's role in 2001 after Ron Wolf retired. Thompson was the pro personnel director and director of player personnel under Wolf from 1992-99 in Green Bay, working with all three of the Packers' top personnel men: Reggie McKenzie, John Dorsey and John Schneider.

Thompson joined Mike Holmgren in Seattle after the 1999 season and has run the draft and advised him on personnel decisions.

Sherman is 53-27 in the regular season since becoming Packers coach in 2000, and the Packers and Philadelphia Eagles are the only NFL teams to reach the playoffs in each of the past four years. But Sherman is 2-4 in the playoffs, including a first-round loss to the Vikings last weekend.

NFL: Gillette Stadium field in good shape

FOXBORO, Mass. — National Football League officials said the field at Gillette Stadium is in good

"They have resulted in widespread criticism and needlessly detracted from Minnesota's dramatic playoff victory. Fans should look to you and your team to see how to compete and win in football."

"But when you lose your focus on playing and engage in side shows as you did on Sunday, you forfeit much of this."

Controversy seems to follow Moss. On Jan. 2, during Minnesota's 21-18 loss to the Washington Redskins, Moss walked off the field with two seconds to play. As the Vikings attempted an onside kick, Moss casually walked off the field. In the code of NFL honor, that is tantamount to quitting.

In the days leading up to the Green Bay game, teammates told Moss about their displeasure with the incident.

He has been fined by the NFL for incidents ranging from squirting an official with a water bottle, which cost him \$25,000, to \$15,000 for verbally abusing corporate sponsors on an airplane. Moss was fined \$5,000 in September for his role in a scuffle with the league's owners.

Moss, who has been hampered recently by a lingering ankle injury, sat out practice Wednesday but was back on Thursday.

"Today was the last day of NFL play," Tice said Thursday before Moss' fine was announced. "He opens things up for other players," Tice said.

That's the biggest threat that Randy brings besides the big-play ability."

condition, despite the New England Patriots' decision not to cover it during recent storms.

The NFL sent a representative to check the field on Thursday amid concerns that it was becoming a quagmire in advance of Sunday's playoff game with the Indianapolis Colts.

"Our representative said there was no issue with the field," NFL spokesman Greg Aiello told The Boston Globe. "He reported that the field was dry, the footing is excellent."

The Patriots didn't cover the field Wednesday, but Aiello said that's because the grounds crew was painting it.

The field was covered Thursday night and Aiello said it would be covered on Friday night. The NFL requires the field to be covered on the day and night before a game if there is any possibility of precipitation.

When the Patriots refused to cover the field earlier this week, there was speculation coach Bill Belichick was hoping to muck up conditions to slow down the explosive Colts offense.

Belichick dismissed those questions Thursday, saying "My job is not to pull weeds."

Playoffs: NFL serves up some tasty matchups

PLAYOFFS, FROM BACK PAGE

"I still consider myself to be a young quarterback, believe it or not, even though quarterback years are kind of like dog years," he says. "I'm in my seventh year and I'm known as an old man as far as quarterbacks go in the NFL."

All four quarterfinals are re-matchups of regular-season games, and all are at the same venue as the first contests.

AFC Indianapolis (13-4) at New England (14-2)

Manning threw 32 of his 49 TD passes indoors — 26 of them in the RCA Dome and six at Detroit's Ford Field. The temperature in Foxboro on Sunday is likely to be in the 30s.

"People make a big deal of that," he says. "I think it just depends on who plays the best, whether you're at home or away in a dome or in weather or whatnot."

"Whatnot" in this case might be the Patriots' crowd and New England's 19-game winning streak in Foxboro. The Pats also are one of only three teams to finish 14-2 for two straight seasons.

The crowd? Manning calls more plays at the line of scrimmage than any quarterback in the NFL.

"It's always a huge advantage for us playing at home," Brady says. "I know going on the road, it's tougher when it's loud. From an opposing team's view, it's awfully tough when the other crowd is very loud — and our fans are."

Previous meeting: Patriots 27-24, Sept. 9.

New York Jets (11-5) at Pittsburgh (15-1)

Like the Falcons, the Steelers seem content to be ignored. And Roethlisberger, 13-0 as the starting quarterback in the NFL, seems content to let Manning, Brady, Daunte Culpepper, Donovan McNabb and the other high-profile quarterbacks take the spotlight.

"There's a little bit of pressure out there, obviously, because you lose, you go home," he said after some relaxed horseplay in the locker room this week. "But I don't want to go out there and have too much pressure and stress on me."

The Jets' Chad Pennington, whose shoulder injury plagued him in last week's overtime win in San Diego, had a virus infection this week. Coach Herman Edwards, who had a touch of the flu himself at that as a potential positive.

"Generally when guys get sick they have good games," Edwards said. "I think one time Mike Jordan got sick and he had what, 100 points or something like that? Maybe that's a good sign when guys get sick."

Previous meeting: Steelers 17-6, Dec. 12.

NFC St. Louis (9-8) at Atlanta (11-5)

The Rams were the first 8-8 team to advance in the playoffs, and the Vikings became the second next day, demonstrating how weak the NFC is this season.

The Falcons also are a bit of a



In the past three games, St. Louis Rams QB Marc Bulger has completed 68 percent of his passes for 568 yards, six touchdowns and three interceptions.

question mark, although with Michael Vick back from injury and Mora as the coach, they have reversed last season's record. They also had wins over two AFC playoff teams, San Diego and Denver, and Vick on a fast track makes them extremely dangerous from anywhere on the field.

The Rams, of course, love an artificial indoor surface, although they would prefer to be in their own dome.

They also have won three straight games and believe they are returning to the elite status they enjoyed for most of the past five years. Coach Mike Martz now says Marc Bulger might be a broken football season.

"I'mmy has just amazed me," Martz says. "What he did quietly while he was away is pretty remarkable."

Previous meeting: Falcons 34-17, Sept. 19.

Minnesota (9-8) at Philadelphia (13-3)

The Eagles are also a bit out of the spotlight, in part because they tanked their last two games after clinching home-field advantage, and in part because they were off last week while Moss shared top billing with Manning and the Colts.

Philadelphia also has been downgraded because Terrell Owens is out with a leg injury and won't be back unless the Eagles make the Super Bowl — and maybe not even then.

But they do have Brian Westbrook, the other playmaker, whose absence from the playoffs last season was probably why they lost their third straight NFC title game.

Moss, whose two touchdown catches in Green Bay were overshadowed by his antics, was limping this week on a sprained ankle after being hobble for much of the season by hamstring problems. But he will play.

Even Minnesota owner Red McCombs got into the act by demanding that the Fox Sports remote play-by-play announcer Joe Buck from the telecast for denouncing Moss' antics.

Fox declined.
Previous meeting: Eagles 27-16, Sept. 20.

Quarterbacks might be key for Steelers, Jets

Jets looking to rattle rookie Roethlisberger

By ALAN ROBINSON
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The New York Jets rattled him into uncharacteristic mistakes and made him look just like a rookie during his most miserable afternoon in the NFL so far.

What they didn't do was beat Ben Roethlisberger.

That may be the biggest challenge confronting the Jets in Saturday's divisional playoff game. Beating the Pittsburgh Steelers means beating Roethlisberger, something no college or pro team has done in 26 games during his final season at Miami of Ohio.

With his 13-0 record, Roethlisberger long ago won over a Steelers-mad city with his poise, maturity and can't-beat-me attitude and energized a franchise that is convinced it is ready to win the fifth Super Bowl trophy it has chased for a quarter-century.

"When you win 13 games in a row, each game there is a little more pressure that mounts, and he has handled it with style and grace," said Jets quarterback Chad Pennington, who, like Roethlisberger, is a former Mid-American Conference star. "I don't expect him to be any different come Saturday."

The Jets came the closest to stopping Roethlisberger's stride, frustrating him repeatedly during a season's-worst performance — 9-for-19 for 144 yards and two interceptions — in Pittsburgh's 17-6 victory Dec. 12.

But the Jets seemed to wear down by the fourth quarter and Roethlisberger hit four of his final five passes for 99 yards,



Quarterback Chad Pennington, left, and the New York Jets face a daunting task in stopping Steelers' rookie Ben Roethlisberger on Saturday. The last time the teams played, Roethlisberger had a season-worst performance, going 9-for-19 with 144 yards and two interceptions. AP photos



though it was running back Jerome Bettis who threw the decisive touchdown pass.

Roethlisberger should get a boost from the return of defensive-stretching wide receiver Plaxico Burress, who sat out the earlier Jets game because of a sore hamstring. But, just like last month, the Steelers expect coach Herman Edwards' team to sell out to stop running backs Jerome Bettis and Duane Staley and force Roeth-

lisberger to beat them.

After all, rookie quarterbacks can't win in the postseason, can they? They used five linebackers (in run support) and brought the safety up sometimes, and that was the first time I'd seen that one," tackle Marvel Smith said.

The Steelers are seeing a lot of firsts during their franchise-best 14-game winning streak, many from Roethlisberger.

Still, what they're asking Ben to do is unrivaled — no NFL team with a record (15-1) as good as Pittsburgh's has entrusted such a task to a rookie quarterback in the postseason.

Only one straight-from-college rookie QB has won his first playoff game since the 1970 merger, Tampa Bay's Shaun King in 1999, though two NFL rookies coming from other pro leagues did it.

"Ben will be fine," coach Bill Cowher said Thursday. "He's had a lot of scrutiny through the course of the season, and we have

played in some big games, and he's really been unflappable when it comes to those type of things. So when Saturday comes around, it's just going to be another football game."

Pennington only wishes it were that simple. He threw three interceptions and looked out of sync throughout the Pittsburgh loss, his second game following a three-week rotation cut injury lay-off. That performance stirred the debate whether he possessed the arm strength and fortitude to take the Jets deep into the playoffs.

Those doubts persisted as the Jets lost three of four, but Pennington bounced back with a strong game (23 of 33, 279 yards, two touchdowns) — and, yes, a strong arm — in last week's 20-17 overtime win in San Diego.

That's why, for all their similarities — equally strong ground games, highly ranked defenses and coaches who once were NFL teammates and assistant coaches

together — the Jets and Steelers realize the better quarterback probably will determine the winner.

The weather should be better than previously forecast, partly cloudy skies with temperatures in the low 20s, so it shouldn't influence the outcome.

"We are excited to get another chance, but we know what our challenge is: We are playing the best team in the AFC," Pennington said. "But it is a challenge I think our team likes."

Just as Roethlisberger is as eager as anyone to see if he's up to the challenge, too.

"You can't be a rookie anymore," he said. "The guys are counting on me too much. You can't make rookie mistakes, though I'll probably make them. You can't afford too many mistakes because if you lose, you go home. It's the playoffs, and you can't afford to lose."

Jets rule out defensive end Abraham

By PETER BOTTE
New York Daily News

NEW YORK — John Abraham will miss his second straight playoff game on Saturday, and there is no guarantee the increasingly defensive Pro Bowl defensive end will be able to suit up if the Jets advance to next week's AFC championship game.

Hern Edwards publicly painted a bleak picture concerning Abraham's availability when he said on Thursday that he "doubted" the ailing Abraham would return to the lineup on Saturday against the Steelers. A team source later confirmed that Abraham's leg injury had been ruled out of action for the sixth consecutive game because of his sprained right knee.

"I doubt it. I doubt if he plays," Edwards said at his daily press briefing. "He can't really athletically play his position the way he's capable of playing it. That's not good for the player, and it's not good for the football team."

The Jets never have found a definitive

time frame regarding Abraham's condition, other than to term it a "week-to-week" proposition since he initially sprained his knee Dec. 5 against Houston. Now there's word that he was told it would be a 6-to-10 week injury.

The Jets admittedly did Abraham a disservice when they initially listed him as probable before he sat out last week's wild-card playoff game against San Diego amid poor field conditions at Qualcomm Stadium.

Abraham declined to discuss his injury status on Thursday, and grew defensive when the questioning turned to quotes attributed to him last week suggesting he was torn between returning and injuring himself further since he is slated for a big free-agent payday in the offseason.

"I was very honest, but y'all took it out of context. I didn't say anything about a contract. I don't know where you got that from," said Abraham, who participated in practice for the second straight day. "I said 'my future,' and (the media) took it completely out of context.... I told them I'd be happy if I got franchised here. I never said I wanted a contract."

When one reporter attempted to explain to Abraham that he had been quoted correctly, Abraham shook his head and walked away. Abraham might not have used the word "contract," but reporters who were present said there was no doubt he understood that the line of questioning was aimed at his pending free-agent status.

"It's definitely a tough situation," Abraham said last week. "I want to be here for my team, but I also have to understand. I'm in kind of a Catch-22 situation. I guess you could say. Either way, whatever I do is pretty much going to factor in on my life, whether we move on or whether we lose. I have to sit back, weigh my options and see what's important."

"I have to think about the long term right now. I don't want to get there and seriously injure myself more than I already have."

A three-time Pro Bowl selection and one of the NFL's top pass-rushing linemen, the 26-year-old Abraham was leading the Jets with 9½ sacks when he was injured last month.

N.Y. Jets (11-6) at Pittsburgh (15-1)

OPENING LINE — Steelers by 8½.
RECORD VS. SPREAD — Jets 8-7, Steelers 12-4.
SERIES RECORD — Steelers lead 15-2.
LAST MEETING — Steelers beat Jets 17-6 on Dec. 12, 2004, at Pittsburgh.

LAST POSTSEASON MEETING — First postseason meeting.

KEY WEEK — Jets beat Chargers 20-17 in OT in wild-card game. Steelers had bye, beat Bills 28-24.

JETS OFFENSE — OVERALL (7), RUSH (1), PASS (22).

JETS DEFENSE — OVERALL (17), RUSH (5), PASS (14).

STEELERS OFFENSE — OVERALL (10), RUSH (20), PASS (28).

STEELERS DEFENSE — OVERALL (11), RUSH (1), PASS (14).

INJURY WATCH — Jets: QB Chad Pennington (knee), RB Lyle Leary (ankle), TE Jeff Porter and James Farrior. In December, Steelers held RB Matt Jones out for 24-17 overtime win.

STATS — Jets: QB Chad Pennington has averaged 4.6 yards per carry in regular season. He led NFL with 31 carries, six TDs, since 2-4-04.

STEELERS — Steelers' loss came in less than 90 yards rushing. Steelers' loss came in less than 90 yards rushing for 172 yards. In last 10 games, Steelers have allowed opponents — as a team — to break 100 yards rushing just twice. That includes the loss to New England.

PLAYERS — Jets: Backup QB Ben Roethlisberger has 28 total yards rushing in back-to-back games. Porter and Farrior were both Pro Bowlers, and will be looking to shut down Marvin.

STREAKS, STATS AND NOTES — Game features AP Offensive and Defensive Records of the Year: Steelers QB Ben Roethlisberger and Jets LB Jonathan Vilma. Jets starting QB Chad Pennington missed practice Wednesday with a sore knee, while backup Quincy Carter went home to Georgia to be with ailing mother, Coach Herman Edwards said. Pennington would be ready by Saturday.

AGENTS — Opponent opponents Steelers are 8-1, Jets are 5-4. — Jets are 0-6 all-time in Pittsburgh. Steelers were undefeated at home this season. — Steelers topped NFL with 618 carries this season, nearly twice their total passes (250). Jets were third with 527 carries. — Jets were second in NFL in regular season with 17 touchdowns.

PLAYERS — Lyle Leary (DE, 197-45) and Steelers coach Bill Cowher (LS, 193-80) are teammates with Philadelphia Eagles. Last time former teammates met in playoffs was last season when Leary and Andy Carter were teammates when Cincinnati's Sam Wyche defeated Houston's Jack Pardee 41-14. Both played for Redskins from 1971-72.

Instant offense

Despite their team-first mantra, the Falcons' fortunes rest largely on Vick's arms and legs

BY PAUL NEWBERY

The Associated Press

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — Michael Vick and those around him keep repeating a familiar mantra: The Atlanta Falcons are a team.

Seriously. They're not kidding.

"Who's the best player on our team?" coach Jim Mora said. "I think if you took a poll of the nation, 100 percent of the people would say Mike Vick. Well, I'll tell you how our locker room feels: The best player on our team is our team."

Then again, the Falcons have perhaps the only player in the NFL who's capable of winning a game all by himself.

The Falcons get their first home playoff game since 1998 on Saturday against the St. Louis Rams. Rest assured, everyone at the Georgia Dome — both on the field and in the stands — will have an eye on No. 2.

"Mike is going to make plays," teammate DeAngelo Hall said. "Mike is going to be Mike, just like Michael Jordan was a team and player together. That's what is going to win the football game for us, I promise you."

Already suspect on defense, the Rams don't plan on letting Vick out of their sight. Stopping him could be another matter.

In Week 2, Vick had one of his best games of the season, rushing for 109 yards, completing 14 of 19 passes for 179 yards and leading the Falcons to a 34-17 victory over St. Louis.

"He's probably the best all-around player in the league," Rams coach Mike Martz said Wednesday. "Obviously, he's the best

playoff positioning all locked up. Vick sat out one game and played only 1½ quarters in the other. Even so, he finished with a staggering 902 yards on the ground, averaging 7½ yards per run.

If anyone is capable of upsetting the playoff balance, it's Vick.

"I do have the ability to make plays when we need them, with my feet, and that's just our advantage," he said. "At the same time, I've got to pick and choose my spots when I take off and run, make sure I give the guys downfield an opportunity to make plays in this game, too."

Not even Vick is capable of beating 11 guys all by himself.

Two years ago, after leading Atlanta to a playoff win at Green Bay's Lambeau Field, he wasn't much of a factor in a second-round loss to Philadelphia. The Falcons failed to score a touchdown as the Eagles held Vick to 30 yards rushing.

"People say I'm the X-factor and I'm the key to winning," he said. "I think the key to winning is our team coming to play as a team and playing together. That's what is going to win the football game for us, I promise you."

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Atlanta quarterback Michael Vick (7), trying to elude Carolina linebacker Brandon Short in a game last October, rushed for 902 yards this season and averaged 7½ yards per carry.

athlete. You've got to account for him first and foremost."

Vick gives the Falcons an extra runner in the backfield, teaming with Warrick Dunn (1,106 yards, nine touchdowns) and T.J. Duckett (509 yards, eight TDs) to form the league's most prolific rushing attack.

"Defending them is like defending the option," Martz said. "That's something the NFL has not seen before. Everyone is scrambling around, trying to find a way to defend it or at least slow it down. I don't know if there's a way to do it."

While Mora has harped on the team theme all season, he's not naive. The rookie coach knows as well as anyone that he has a unique player, one who could make the difference between advancing in the playoffs or calling it a season.

"He draws attention," Mora said. "Every single time he takes a snap, he is a threat to beat you in a multitude of ways. He can throw the ball efficiently from the pocket, he can get out of the pocket and throw it, he can run it, he can stay alive for about three hours and throw it down the field, he goes to hand it off and he's a threat coming out on a bootleg the other way. So, he affects the game every time he touches it."

Every once in a while, someone inside the locker room will slip up and actually say what everyone on the outside is thinking.

Just listen to Eli Manning, as he assessed the matchup on the offensive side. "We have one exciting player. They have an exciting offense," he said. "May be the man win."

When it comes to the Falcons, one man might be enough.

Underdog Rams feeling energized

BY JIM THOMAS

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — They are loose, refreshed and re-energized. Three weeks ago, when they were 6-8, most observers would have given a plug nickel for the Rams' chances of being in the NFL's version of the Elite Eight.

But here they are, the inviolated guest who refuses to leave the party, just two steps removed from the Super Bowl. As they say in Las Vegas, the Rams are playing with house money now.

"We had those two must-win situations at the end of the regular season," defensive end Leonard Little said. "Two teams we had to beat."

And did beat. Doing so, and just getting into the playoffs, "was a lot of weight off our shoulders," Little said.

Better late — extremely late — than never, right? "We never doubted anything," tight end Cameron Cleeland said. "This team's been through turmoil. But look, the (Rams) have made to the playoffs." That's — four out of the last five years.

Actually, five of past six seasons.



St. Louis inbacker Pisa Tinoisua celebrates last Saturday's playoff victory at Seattle.

"We always believed," Cleeland said. "We just knew it."

Maybe so, but they did a good job of hiding it until after Christ-mas. You can call the victory over Philadelphia tainted, because the Eagles rested or pulled many of their starters.

The regular-season finale with the New York Jets was an intense, playoff-like struggle. And, of course, Saturday's 27-20 victo-

ry over Seattle was an intense playoff struggle.

"These guys are energized," coach Mike Martz said. "It's as if the season has just begun in their minds."

The Rams' string of three consecutive victories matches their longest winning streak of the season and is the second-longest for any of the eight remaining playoff teams.

"For us right now, you just wouldn't want to have a (first-round) bye," Martz said. "In years past, with the experience that we had, we were at a high level going into the playoffs, and you kind of wanted to rest your guys a little bit. That's not the case now."

After winning just two road contests during the regular season, the Rams are faced with the challenge of winning their second straight road playoff game.

Road teams won three of four contests over the just-completed wild-card weekend, but recent history shows that knocking off a first-round bye is nearly impossible in the NFC.

Since the current 12-team playoff format began in 1990, NFC

teams that have the first-round bye are 25-3 in the conference semifinals.

One of those three upsets occurred last Jan. 10, when the second-seeded Rams were upset at home by eventual NFC champion Carolina, 29-23 in double overtime. The only other NFC playoff teams with first-round byes to lose in the divisional round were Chicago (to Philadelphia) in the 2001 season, and San Francisco (to Green Bay) in 1995.

All three of those losing teams were No. 2 seeds. Atlanta also is a No. 2 seed. The Falcons are 7-1 at home this season, losing only to Detroit, 17-10, in Game 5.

So it's a tough task facing the Rams. But in the joyous visitors locker room in Seattle, all things seemed possible.

"It's just great being in the locker room with all these guys," offensive guard Tom Nutter said. "It's just like a big family. We went through some adversity through the season, but it's everybody got an extra energy boost coming into this week."

And what now? "No holds barred," Nutter said. "We're good to go. We feel like we're peaking at this right minute."

St. Louis (9-8) at Atlanta (11-5)

OPENING LINE — Falcons by 7.
RECORD VS. SPREAD — Rams 7-10. Falcons 2-1.

SERIES RECORD — Rams lead 46-24-2.
LAST MEETING — Falcons beat Rams 34-17 on Sept. 18, 2004, at Atlanta.

LAST POSTSEASON MEETING — First postseason meeting.

LAST WEEK — Rams beat Seahawks 27-20 in wild-card game. Falcons had bye lost to Seahawks 26-26 in Week 2.

RAMS OFFENSE — OVERALL (6), RUSH (26), PASS (11).

FALCONS OFFENSE — OVERALL (20), RUSH (11), PASS (12).

FALCONS DEFENSE — OVERALL (14), RUSH (11), PASS (12).

KEY MATCHUP — Rams' defense vs. Falcons' offense. Rams' defense has the line to look most of season for unit to figure first-round playoff game in playoffs last week, posting six catches for 108 yards and a touchdown. Rams' defense has Isaac Bruce combined with most yards of any team's top receivers (2,630) in league. Rams had league-worst offense in 2004.

STREAK AND NOTES — Against common opponents, Falcons are 6-3, while Rams are 7-3, including three wins over Seattle. Rams WR Torrance Holt was fourth in NFL with 1,272 yards receiving in regular season, becoming 100th NFL player to have five consecutive 1,200-yard seasons. He had his second 1,200-yard season in 2004, posting six catches for 108 yards and a touchdown.

Isaac Bruce combined with most yards of any team's top receivers (2,630) in league. Rams had league-worst offense in 2004.

Atlanta was plus-2. Rams were minus-10 in regular season. Rams had 12-4 yard punt return average in regular season. Rams RB Warren Gump posted third career 1,000-yard season (1,105) with career-high nine TDs rushing.

SPORTS



Stronger steroid rules
figure to get an
immediate test, Page 30

Armed for the playoffs



AP photos

Clockwise, from top left, New England's Tom Brady, Indianapolis' Peyton Manning, Philadelphia's Donovan McNabb and Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger lead their teams this weekend in the second round of the NFL playoffs. The remaining eight teams feature talented quarterbacks.

Main focus this weekend is on Foxboro

BY DAVE GOLDBERG
The Associated Press

Is there any NFL playoff game this weekend other than the one in New England?

You wouldn't know it from the buzz surrounding Sunday's contest in Foxboro featuring MVP Peyton Manning and the Colts against the Patriots, winners of two of the past three Super Bowls and five straight games over the record-breaking quarterback.

Yes, there are eight teams in the playoffs and three other games this weekend. They are outside the spotlight, though.

"We just worry about us," says Atlanta

■ Young QBs figure to be under some heat in frosty Pittsburgh, Page 34

coach Jim Mora, whose Falcons (11-5) are the NFC's second-seeded team and face visiting St. Louis on Saturday.

"Eventually we will be a blip on the radar screen. We certainly want to make sure we're on the radar screen for the right reasons if we ever do get above ground."

True enough. If there's a second game gaining attention, it's not for the right reasons. It's because Randy Moss pretended to moon Green Bay fans after scoring a touchdown last week for the Vikings, who play at Philadelphia in Sunday's early game.

Even Pittsburgh — which had the NFL's best record at 15-1 and unveiled the most suc-

■ Atlanta's mercurial Vick remains the X-factor facing St. Louis, Page 35

cessful rookie quarterback ever in Ben Roethlisberger — has been carrying a low profile as it waits for the Jets in the opening game of the weekend.

Those games build up to late Sunday afternoon for Colts-Patriots.

The rematch of last year's AFC title game pits Manning, who broke Dan Marino's season record for touchdown passes with 49, against Tom Brady, who doesn't have great statistics but has two Super Bowl rings.

The comparisons: Manning is Marino, who set tons records but never won a Super Bowl. Brady is Joe Montana, who was so cool and collected and won four championships.

But that's a bit deceptive — Manning is only 28 and has time to accumulate hardware.

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Bryant's severe ankle sprain sidelines Kobe vs. LeBron matchup in L.A.

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Unfazed by \$10,000 fine, embattled Viking shows no remorse for antics

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Williams helps depleted Duke remain undefeated with a win at N.C. State

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